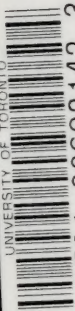



THE · PSYCHOLOGY OF · THE · GREAT · WAR

BY G · R · STIRLING · TAYLOR

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BY
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TO
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AND THE
LATIN SPIRIT

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I: THE FACTORS INVOLVED

It is a reasonable assumption that the greater part of Europe, in the month of August 1914, did not get to the work of promiscuous slaughter from any hasty, passing whim. After nearly two thousand years of (somewhat reluctant) submission to the religion of Christian fellowship, the chief European races had been compelled at last to acknowledge that a decision by the sword and the gun was too near the methods of the savage to be adopted by respectable people. It was seen quite clearly that we could no longer pleasantly indulge in superior allusions to the Dark Ages and the Barbaric epoch if our own hands were not comparatively clean of blood and gunpowder. Besides, it was generally agreed that, quite apart from any Christian sentiment of brotherly love, a better method had been discovered of conquering our fellow-men. When the modern man feels the desire of conquest and piracy, he goes into trade, or he becomes a banker. It is safer than the old method, and the profits are higher. It was all very well for the simple-minded Mohammed and the German princes of the Thirty Years War of Religion to preach dominance by the sword. The manufacturers and merchants of Manchester and Chicago, of Berlin and Milan and Petrograd, had decided that their ledgers and banking accounts would get into intolerable disorder if wild men kept shooting through the office windows.

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At least such appeared to be the position. Therefore, it seems obvious that no mere scratching on the surface of modern affairs is likely to give any sufficient reason for this volcanic eruption of 1914, just as the travellers to Vesuvius will not get a very correct idea of the mountain's fire by digging in the gardens round Naples.

The basis of this book is the belief that it is impossible to get even the most trivial understanding of the cause and cure of this Great War without a general knowledge of the history of the nations that are fighting it. One very recent event in Germany will show how closely this War is linked with the oldest history of European affairs. A book by Herr Bloem, "*Das eiserne Jahr*," which has sold by the thousand in Berlin during this year, put into print the statement that France could no longer be regarded as a factor in the politics of the world, and continued: "Rome has fallen, Spain is humbled, Italy is worn out . . . we are in the presence of the bankruptcy of the Romance civilisation"—the modest assumption being that it was now the turn of another stock of ideas, the Teutonic.

Now that statement can only be weighed by a reference to the history of Europe during the two thousand years wherein the Latin or Romance dominance has existed. It is a record which, as a matter of fact, will not be judged by arm-chair philosophers, of however Teutonic a stolidity of learning and research. It is only the Ages that can judge the Ages. Nevertheless, a few of the broadest facts of history may be profitably recalled to the mind of those who are audacious enough to seek the reasons for this stupendous Great War of 1914. The German minds have raised it to the dignity of an empire build-

ing which is to replace the structure of Rome. Let us take them at their estimate and examine the general evidence.

Beneath the historical evidence, it will quickly be discovered that there is the still older fact of Race. There is no happier hunting-ground for the rash free-lance of generalisation than the subject of racial distinctions. Teuton, Celt, Slav and Latin are terms bandied about with a confidence that is by no means always justified by the facts. At the best, the knowledge of the origin and the present distribution of races is a dark, unexplored continent of Science. Probably, every great nation is made up of the most confused mixture of more clearly defined stocks.

It will be necessary to recall in this book that the War of 1914 cannot comfortably be summed up as a great racial struggle between a Teutonic race in the middle, fighting Slavs on the east and south; Celtic-Latins on the west side, and Anglo-Saxons in the north. On closer examination it will be found that there is much Teutonic blood in France; still more Celtic blood in Germany and Austria; there are many Slavs in Germany; while the history of Russia, although not its population, has been dominated by Teutonic blood throughout.

This War is indeed a great clashing of races, but the problem is not so simple as many have hastily assumed. Still more have most failed to realise the close cousinship of the Slav and the Celt. The Slav of Western Russia and Galicia and the Breton peasant are perhaps the purest stocks of Europe; and there is considerable evidence that the two are of closer kinship than anything which binds them to many of their nearer neighbours.

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Once more, closely allied to the racial facts are the psychological distinctions that have thrust themselves forward in almost every column of war news. The condition of German morals cannot be fairly judged by the infringement of the neutrality of Belgium. On that evidence most national histories would wear an equally soiled look. But that the German psychology should have imagined that Belgium could be cowed by gross brutality to civilians is an astounding fact that will illuminate many corners of this dark problem. It is really instructive to analyse that peculiar condition of a national mind that seriously thinks it will help towards the crushing of the French if a few bombs thrown into Paris succeed in killing some children and elderly persons. It is the more astounding that the Germans should offer this method of warfare as a proof of their good faith in desiring to spread Teutonic culture in a fertile flood over a barbaric or worn-out earth. It is particularly necessary to consider this national psychology in a calm, disattached manner. It must not be dismissed as merely pertaining to the abnormal and insane. Just as it is impossible to draw an indictment against a nation, so likewise it is impossible to sign a lunacy certificate for a whole people.

This psychological side of the subject is by no means altogether coincident with the matter of Race, although it is no doubt nearly related. But that it is an independent factor will appear when one remembers that the peaceful Danes and the cultured Swedes are near kinsmen of the hooligan Prussians; perhaps nearer akin than the latter are to their brothers of South Germany. It will be necessary to find some explanation of this fact.

The use of the adjective "hooligan," in reference to the Prussians, must not be regarded as merely an alien and prejudiced opinion. It is used in an attempt to be scientifically exact. The men who seize the opportunity of a state of war to kill the unarmed, and to burn monuments of art and craftsmanship, are of exactly the same type as the ignorant and improperly fed criminals who will seize the opportunity of a fire or a political disturbance to commit any damage within their reach. The Prussian has only worked out, with German pedantry, the methods which the youths of the slums adopt with unconscious levity. To take the opportunity of inflicting one's ideas by noise and violence is exactly the state of mind of the boys who break up the political meeting of a party to which they are opposed. Therefore, following the admirable scientific rule that similar circumstances should be denoted by similar terms, the word hooligan is used as the most exact word to cover the facts. It is a word which does not yet appear in all the more orthodox dictionaries. But then the Prussian has not before appeared in civilised society. Perhaps, in this sense, the Prussian may have made out his claim to be the apostle of a new order.

The object of this book is to state the main facts in the history of the chief nations involved in this Great War of 1914; in order to find an explanation for it, and some basis for considering its possible results. It will attempt to sift out the historical facts from the vaguer and more conventional opinions. There are those who, in the moment of enthusiasm, describe the whole clash as a "Sacred War" of the Latin against the Teuton. But it is desirable to make a more precise

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analysis of the position than that. Besides, strictly speaking, it is no more a sacred war to stop this Prussian outrage than it would be a holy act to kill a mad dog in the back garden.

The chief factors of the problem are Teutonic Germany, Celtic France, Slav Russia. The two originators of the war, Austria-Hungary and Servia, are only secondary factors, but they are very illuminating developments of the main factors. The history of these five nations will be discussed in the order given. As for Belgium, it seems to have got beyond the possibility of calm historical treatment. The Belgians are more fitted for the realm of inspired Art than as a collection of historical facts. Heroism such as theirs needs no dull historians to explain it or record it. Italy, the home of the Latin spirit, so happens to have taken a less prominent place in the war than France and Belgium, its brother exponents of the Latin civilisation. Yet the neutrality of Italy is, when one considers it, as remarkable an example of that spirit as the fighting of the French and Belgians. For Italy, formally bound—since 1882—by its politicians to a Teutonic alliance, refused to betray its Race when it came to the point. It was not bound to fight by the technical terms of its alliance. It had the moral courage to refuse to be bound by its moral obligations. The highest morality has always been the overcoming of moral obligations. Italy has demonstrated that it is the freest democracy in Europe; its national will decides whether it shall make war or maintain peace. The rulers of Italy are perhaps more under the control of their people than any great government in Europe. But then one must remember that the house of Savoy,

the present royal house of Italy, is probably less tainted with Teutonic blood than any great ruling family of Europe.

In that last sentence is the core of the argument of this book ; or rather it is the position to which an analysis of the facts drives the student. The party of brute force in Europe has always been the Teutonic element. Until overborne by other factors, the man of Teutonic blood is inclined to rely first and foremost on physical strength as his chief weapon. He has always preferred to knock his opponent down before he argued with him. He considers that the most effective manner of planting his culture is to drive it in with a siege-howitzer.

But even the statement that the true Teuton believes in physical force does not really reach the heart of his position. His insistence on brute force appears to grow from his unhealthy craving to govern other people. As an outcome of this exceedingly objectionable hobby, one may note that almost all the ruling royal families of Europe are of Teutonic blood. Probably the King of Montenegro is the royal prince whose blood would least react to the Teutonic anti-toxin.

So long as government consisted of kings and princes, it was a comparatively harmless institution. The result was arbitrary and erratic ; but it was, in the nature of things, inconvenient and wearisome for a king to be continually racing round in the business of governing. It was only to be expected that he would not altogether give up his hunting and dancing for such unpleasant work. Unfortunately, the worst of the kings gradually worked out a method by which they could get this work done by subordinates. Hence the arrival of the

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official and the bureaucrat. There were possibilities of government in the bureaucratic system which convincingly appealed to the Teuton mind : it was as the water to the young duck.

It was left to Prussia to put the final crown of thorns on Democracy by making the soldier the chief official of the land. The history of Prussia is the history of the organisation of an armed bureaucracy. The only adequate symbol of Prussia is the figure of an overdressed pirate, who, much against his will, has been taught how to write and add a few simple figures ; who spends his shore days in reading the works of a set of professors paid to supply the crew with literature of an appropriately blood-stained nature.

Prussianised Germany is the triumph of the bureaucrat. This Great War is the reaction against Prussia, Brute Force and Bureaucracy.

II: THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EUROPE

BEFORE considering the national histories separately it will clear the mind to get some general ideas of the European whole of which these nations are the local units. For there was once a time when Europe was much more of a whole than it is to-day. Historically speaking, the main nations (except Russia) that are fighting in this Great War are the fragments that remained from the break-up of the Roman Empire. And, quite apart from the Roman Empire, it will clarify the problems if we get some idea of the chief racial distributions that have occurred over the area involved.

The history of Western Europe through mediæval times, and up to the present day, may be roughly described as the effect of the Roman civilisation working on various alien peoples. The nations of Europe might almost be said to have done great things in the world in proportion as they learned correctly their lessons from Rome; they have become civilised and cultured in so far as they absorbed Roman culture. Italy and France have become the intellectual leaders of Europe because they were more Romanised than any other. Prussia has always been barbaric because it had no chance of coming directly in contact with Rome at all. Rome, in its full-blooded sense, was dead before Prussia began. Russia has indirectly touched Rome through Byzantine Constantinople; but, as we shall see later, the unique

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thing about Russian civilisation is that it has hitherto stood almost outside European civilisation ; looking on at its faults and follies ; until now it would seem as if it might reap the benefits without sharing in the disadvantages. But of that later.

Now, this generalisation concerning the influence of Rome must not be pushed too far. The Roman spirit may be taken, in the absence of any very definite ethnological certainty, to be the civilisation of the Mediterranean Race : a people which was the first large stock to impress itself on European history. But the Mediterranean Race was by no means alone on the scene. There have been at least two other great ethnological stocks in Europe : the larger, a race generally known as the Alpine Race, with the central parts of the Continent for its main habitat ; ranging from the western plains of Russia, along the Danube valley, across the head of the Rhine, through France, as far as the extremities of Brittany and the British Islands. Then there is another distinct great racial stock, to which the name Nordic or Northern has been given ; for its main home, within anything approaching the historic period, was the north of Europe, and more particularly the southern extremity of the Scandinavian peninsula and the shores of the Baltic.

The history of Europe has been the result of the inter-relations of those three main stocks : the Mediterranean, the Alpine and the Northern races. There is no such thing as a pure stock ; and, generally speaking, the purer the stock the lower the vitality and civilisation. The Northern Race we roughly denote by the term Teutonic ; the Mediterranean Race is more usually termed the

Latin ; while there is no popular term to cover the widely distributed Alpine Race. But it is at first a little startling when one realises that the latest ethnology describes the Slavs as the east end of the Alpine people and the oldest French stock (particularly the Breton) as first cousins, at the other or western end. If this theory be accepted, the purest French and the purest Russians become a racial family into which the Teutons have more or less driven a dividing wedge from the north ; and Central Europe becomes the home of a mixed Alpine-Teutonic Race, of which the racial ingredients vary in proportion in different districts.

There is evidence that one of the oldest and best established blends between these two races arose on a common meeting-ground somewhere in the north-west corner of what is now Germany ; and the resulting race, usually termed the Celts, proved very vigorous. It multiplied and covered the lands which are now France and the British Isles. The "Franks" were a purer Teutonic people, who by chance gave their name, but not very much of their blood, to France.

Suffice it, for the present purpose, to say that the empire which Charles the Great united for a brief period in A.D. 800 was the revival, in Celtic-Teutonic form, of the Roman Empire of the classical period. Charles's dominions stretched from Italy to Denmark, from Brittany to the Carpathians, and it was out of the debris of this empire that the western nations of modern Europe were founded.

The ruling element was at first the Frank warrior ; but the Celtic blood in France was not long in recovering its supremacy. The farther towards the east one went in

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Charles's Empire, the more Teuton blood there was, until it came up against the Slav races, which were the main stock of what is now Prussia.

It was at the Treaty of Verdun, A.D. 843, that the grandsons of Charles the Great divided between them the empire of their grandfather. The eldest, Lothair, was recognised as the Emperor ; and with the title, of course, went Rome and the provinces of Italy, and also a long strip of territory extending from the north of Italy along the west valley of the Rhine to the North Sea at the Belgian and Dutch coast. This central nucleus of the empire divided the dominions of the second brother, Lewis, from the lands of the third brother, Charles. The eastern kingdom of Lewis was practically the main parts of modern Germany and Austria, and was, in essence, a Teutonic country. Charles held the lands to the west of Lothair's nucleus ; in other words, he was the king of what is now modern France, except for the lack of its eastern side, which Lothair retained for his own dominions.

Here, therefore, we find, as early as the year 843, France and Germany already in rough shape. The Treaty of Verdun is almost the only international agreement which has been observed by Europe. The Great War of 1914 is, in essence, a struggle which will decide whether that treaty shall be still observed and honoured. A great part of the history of Europe has been a struggle for the conquest of the central kingdom that the Treaty of Verdun gave to the Emperor Lothair.

It is no forced attempt to strain the argument when one points out that the very spot on which this treaty was signed is perhaps the most central and vital place in the military situation of the campaign of 1914. In more

senses than one, Verdun remains the pivot of European history. France and Germany are fighting for existence over the body of Lothair's central kingdom. The continued existence of Holland and Belgium, both parts of that central kingdom, is one of the main problems of the contest.

Within a hundred and fifty years of the Treaty of Verdun, France had thrown off the Frankish dominance by founding a more purely Celtic kingdom under Hugues Capet; a royal house which, as we shall see later, eventually brought all France into unity. This left the eastern kingdom founded by Lewis as the purer expression of German rule. The middle kingdom gradually disappeared as an independent entity, and was absorbed for a long time (until France grew stronger) in the German kingdom. Indeed, for a few years, Charles the Fat, son of Lewis of Germany, was able to reunite all the lands of Charles the Great under his rule. But he was deposed in 887; and France went its way towards that complete independence of the Empire which has done so much to form its individuality.

Germany, on the other hand, retained its close association with the old Empire of Rome or, rather, its successor, the Empire of Charles the Great. By the beginning of the tenth century, the Dukes of Saxony had seized the chief control of the German lands. Their power was vastly increased when Otto of Saxony was invited by the Italian states to go to Italy and bring peace to their local jealousies by being crowned Emperor of Rome and King of the Lombards. This he did in 962: a most important date in the story of Europe; for henceforth, until the days of Napoleon, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire

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was chosen from one of the ruling houses of Germany. In other words, Germany through the Middle Ages, and long into modern times, remained the ruling race in all that was left of the old Roman Empire. What the position amounted to in practice was that from the crowning of Otto it was formally assumed that the man who was the chief king of the German States had also the right to be crowned as Emperor in Rome if he cared to trouble to travel so far.

But the imperial crown had more formal splendours than practical advantages. Indeed, it brought anarchy to the German kingdom. For its monarchs, in the vulgar idiom, had bitten off more than they could chew. Too much involved with the affairs of Italy and the struggle with the Popes, they gradually lost their control over both the German people and the Italian states also. The time came when the Hohenstaufen monarchs regarded Italy rather than Germany as the centre of their power; and then they tried to teach the free Italian cities the lessons of Teutonic autocracy. But, allied with the Popes, the cities of the Lombard League destroyed Frederick of Hohenstaufen at Legnano in 1176. Whereupon the Guelph dynasty in Germany, the opponents of the Hohenstaufens, endeavoured to seize the supreme power in Germany. Frederick was able to beat them; but eventually the Guelphs built for themselves instead a power as the kings of Hanover and Brunswick; and to-day they face the German Empire as kings of Great Britain—a very pertinent example of the continued necessity to go to the roots when we endeavour to judge contemporary history. But the Hohenstaufens could not appreciate their danger.

Frederick II. spent almost his whole time in Italy, and regarded Sicily as his richest possession. Thereupon, the smaller princes of Germany saw their chance. They built up a tradition, and, better still, the facts of local independence. Germany grew up as a strange collection of small states. As we have seen, the freer communities and cities of Italy had confirmed the same condition of affairs by the battle of Legnano. So the German Emperors of the Middle Ages and modern times found themselves rulers of a vast number of principalities that paid comparatively little attention to their nominal chief. Thus it came about that to Bismarck was left the problem of getting some kind of unity amongst the German states, hundreds of years after the problem had been solved in France. But the formal Empire was dissolved in 1806, when Napoleon stood all the arrangements of Europe on their head, and it emerged as a resorting of the fragments. For the moment we are chiefly concerned in remembering that the problem before Bismarck and Prussia was largely owing to the over-ambition of the Hohenstaufens in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

But when the formal German-Roman Empire ceased, in 1806, the title had long been the hereditary possession of the Hapsburgs, Dukes of Austria, so that when the German Confederation took the place of the Empire, it was the Austrian house of Hapsburg which was its head. Hence, as we shall see, Bismarck's first step in the development of the Prussian state was to break the power of Austria in the German Empire. That was done. The present War is Prussia's next attempted step—towards the Empire of Europe again ?

III: GERMANY

THE history of Germany, in the modern sense, is mainly the history of the growth of Prussia and the Hohenzollern dynasty. The kingdom of Prussia, strictly speaking, is not of very ancient lineage, for it was first acknowledged as a kingdom in the year 1713 ; it is therefore quite one of the parvenu states of Europe. However, on its way to the higher circles, it has had some interesting family history which throws light on its more fashionable career.

The Hohenzollerns, like their age-long rivals, the Hapsburgs of Austria, began their recorded history as successful counts and landowners in the neighbourhood of the north Swiss border. They were a pushing family, and one of them became *burggraf* of Nuremberg about the year 1170. The property was so well managed—for there is a thrifty bourgeois strain in the Hohenzollern blood—that his descendant, Frederick, in the early years of the fifteenth century, was able to lend the Emperor Sigismund a considerable sum of money. As security for the loan, Frederick Hohenzollern took the electorate of Brandenburg ; and when the money was not repaid he became its permanent possessor in 1415. By this sound commercial transaction the family established itself in the district of Berlin. It is perhaps a source of regret to a race of war lords that they bought their capital as commoner men buy groceries.

The previous history of Brandenburg bears on our present subject. In the high day of the Roman Empire, it had been inhabited by Teutonic peoples, who had gone off westward to take part in the general scramble for the wealth of the crumbling provinces of Rome. The Teutons were always a plundering lot. Since they left their lands empty, with no apparent intention of returning, a Slav race of Wends about the sixth century took up their abode in deserted Brandenburg. For the Slavs, on their part, have usually been a well-behaved, peaceful race, not given to fighting for anything that was desired by anybody else.

Here the Slav tribes got on happily for several centuries, until the German races, having possessed themselves of as much Roman wealth and civilisation as they could absorb, began to turn back to the north again. Of course, being warriors, they at once set to conquering the Slavs; and, combining business with culture-spreading (after the manner of to-day) we find them forcing their Teutonic brand of Christianity on the Slavs in a manner which the latter resented. One missionary came all the way from the south of Europe with the set purpose of earning the crown of martyrdom by breaking the idols of the Slavs. With a touch of humour which probably was overlooked by the military Teutons, the peaceful heathen Wends refused to do anything so ungentlemanly as to kill him; putting the saint gently, instead, into a boat, wherein he might float down the Oder river, with the gentle hint: "If you must preach so much, kindly say it all to the fishes and the birds." That is an instructive example of Slavic psychology.

Gradually the Slavs were killed by the culture-bearers

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of that time, or, more generally, turned into serfs, whose stock has remained, in part, the downtrodden Prussian peasant to this day. In one district, the Wendish language is still the local speech.

Thus was founded the Mark of Brandenburg: a province garrisoned by German warriors, keeping in subjection an alien race of Slavs. It was the origin of the Prussian junkers. A similar condition of affairs existed farther north in the district which was, and is, known as Prussia proper. Here another Slav tribe was invaded in 1230 by the Teutonic Knights, a body of Crusaders quite after the German heart, who delivered their religion at the point of the lance, and took over the conquered country as a return for their trouble. In this case the Slavs were practically exterminated; and the district was colonised by Germans.

The method of these Teutonic Knights is worth recalling as a foreshadow of more recent events. The High Master of the Order, whose official vows made him the apostle of the Lord, with worldly minded discretion, before leaving for the front, got himself invested, on behalf of his Order, as hereditary owner of all the lands they might chance to conquer. The Knights were followed by the trading class, and that close co-operation began which the present Emperor of Germany so ardently seeks with the commercial magnates. The towns of Königsberg and Thorn, prominent in the present campaign, are remains of the foundations of these Knights which may help to materialise their founders in the mind of the reader.

When the Prussian Slavs broke out in the national revolt of 1261, the Christian Knights seized the oppor-

tunity for cruel suppression ; and the Slav nobles were swept away, leaving the peasants at the mercy of their conquerors. Every able-bodied man was then enlisted in military service, not merely for home defence, after the obligation common in mediæval society, but for foreign warfare also. In other words, Prussia became a military state from its earliest days. Any attempt to raise the civilisation of the peasant class was conspicuously neglected. They were regarded mainly as food for the sword. It is worth remembering that it was the vast number of Slavs who were sold by their conquerors that gave the word "slave" to several of the Western languages. Speaking broadly, the Germans were slave-drivers ; and the Slavs were a people who were peaceful enough to be driven.

In the year 1611, the Hohenzollern Elector of Brandenburg had been chosen as the Duke of Prussia also ; and by the year 1701 his possessions were sufficiently substantial to allow him to assume the title of King of Prussia. He chose that province as the name of his kingdom because it was the only part of his domain which he held as his independent property ; for the electorate of Brandenburg was under the suzerainty of the Emperor of Germany.

This account of the foundation of the power of Prussia has been given because it indicates national characteristics which have never died. It may be replied that all the nations started their careers as marauders. That is generally true. The noteworthy point about the Prussians, however, is that they have retained so many of their ancestral qualities long after their neighbours have changed them for a newer code.

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Prussia is the purest survival of the Early Middle Ages.

So far in its history, Prussia and the rest of Germany had not reached the general condition of culture and comfort of the rest of Western Europe. The meanness of nature had been amply seconded by the scourge of the Thirty Years' Religious War of 1618 to 1648. In a somewhat paradoxical attempt to further the true doctrines of Christianity, the princes of the German Empire, assisted by every other European monarch who thought he could extract any spoil from the confusion, ravaged the northern Teutonic states until the population went down to one-half of what it had been when the war began. Wild animals took the place once more of human animals, and for two hundred years the German peasant was below the standards of European civilisation in every sense of the term.

With the first kings of Prussia we reach the beginning of the modern nation. Frederick I., in 1688, took over from his father, the Great Elector, a state which the latter had tried hard to bring up to the current tone of his neighbours' dominions. He had aided education, beautified Berlin, organised agriculture and industry. Nevertheless, even in so doing he had begun that system of military and bureaucratic rule which from the beginning seemed the doom of Prussia. But Frederick I. was not of a very ambitious nature; and being somewhat of an artist and genially disposed, he paid more attention to art and science than to governing. With the commercial instincts of his family, he hired out his army to the neighbouring monarchs, and spent the money in founding an Academy of Science and another of Painting

and Sculpture. In short, with a little luck he might have saved Prussia from sinking to a military and bureaucratic career in European history.

But it was not to be. His son, Frederick William I., who reigned from 1713 to 1740, handed over his people to every evil that it is possible to conceive of in the sphere of government. His is the most critical name in the history of his country. When Prussia was on the point of modern civilisation, Frederick William decided that it should remain barbaric. His successor, the Great Frederick, was merely a cork helplessly floating on the flood which his father had let loose. It is the father, not the more famous son, who is the main pivot in Prussian history. The Great War of 1914 was inevitable after Frederick William I. had ruled Prussia for twenty-seven years. He ruined her moral constitution as irretrievably as a mother ruins her child by feeding it on gin and herrings at the age of one.

Frederick William's first act of state was to dismiss the artists and increase the army. The thing that pleased him most of his father's reforms was the efficient postal service—because the profits enabled him to maintain six new battalions of soldiers! Foreign envoys to his court sent home the news that there was now no chance of getting an official post in Berlin unless one were an officer; and they added that the King made a particular point of snubbing anyone who had pretensions of learning. From that day the soldier has been the centre of the Prussian state.

In the beginning of his reign the ordinary method of recruiting the Prussian army was "simply kidnapping accompanied by bloodshed—a sort of slave-hunting," to

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quote one of the most authoritative modern histories. After this genial introduction to the duty of national service, the discipline in the army was conducted in so brutal a manner that 30,000 men deserted from the ranks during the reign ; a step not to be taken except under pressure, for the penalty was practically flogging to death. The same inducement to military enthusiasm was applied to a private who ventured to say one word of protest to an officer. Since the time of the Romans nothing had been seen to equal the discipline of Frederick William's army.

That supreme symbol of the collapse of intelligence—the sergeant's cane—became the instrument of the Prussian drill yard. The Prussian soldier was beaten into blind obedience to his officer ; and the day soon came when the infantry were sent into battle surrounded by cavalry to arrest the deserters. It became such a frightful fate to serve in the Prussian army that even kidnapping his subjects became too impossible a task ; and by the end of his reign Frederick William found that half his soldiers were foreigners who were simple enough to take the risk of serving a Prussian king. If the recruits failed by all other ways, then the recruiting officers surrounded the churches during service hours, and seized all the young men they wanted.

It was not only the slavish peasants who were swept into the army net. The whole noble class was treated in the same way, except, of course, that it was their acceptable privilege to be at the handle end of the cane. Frederick William even seized a noble as he seized a peasant, by main force, if he refused to come by persuasion. The King of Prussia had no other use for his

nobles ; more frivolous monarchs have preferred the gentler excitements of a court, but Frederick William dismissed the trappings of his father. He lived always in a uniform, with a cane in his hand continually ; he sat on wooden benches, and passed his evenings drinking beer with his generals. His ideal of life was a barrack yard, and his contemporaries called him the " Sergeant King."

So self-centred was the King of Prussia in his own ideas that any other manner of ruling was beyond his mental grasp. He went on a visit to George I. of England (who was also at that time King of Hanover), and looked at the army of his host with the same open-mouthed wonder that a countryman gazes at the Lord Mayor's show. As he wrote home to a friend : " They do their duty because they delight in it, not from a sense of subordination, for scarcely a blow can be dealt any man among them under pain of the King's displeasure. Every private soldier knows this, and yet the army is in good order ; which greatly surprises me." It was the naïve astonishment of a savage in the presence of civilisation. In the contemporary French army flogging was almost unknown—but then the French have even less German blood than the English.

There was no end to the dull simplicity of this Prussian chief. He sincerely imagined that he was a kind father to his people, that he really was doing his best for their welfare. He called himself a Republican, meaning one who makes the welfare of the state his only aim. He drafted orders that the recruits should be decently treated, but he knew perfectly well that the officers were corrupt, and did not obey their instructions. He

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certainly did something towards increasing agricultural and industrial prosperity ; but at every turn he showed that it was only as an end to growing more soldiers per square acre, and getting more taxation per head.

In this Prussian system the Councillor of Taxes was next in rank to the Councillor of War ; and in each town the chief tax-collector became the representative of Frederick William's paternal mind. The farce surely reached its moment of loudest laughter when the tax-man was given the power to control the morals of the citizens. And what was the reason ? Was it any concern for morality ? May the tribal deities of Prussia forbid any such idealist an intention. The Councillor of Taxes was instructed to make the people moral because depravity led to pauperism ; and it was impossible to raise taxes from paupers !

This weird philosophy of the sergeant's cane and the tax-ledger was Frederick William's contribution to the science of government. It was the final stroke which crushed democracy in Prussia, and made it a military bureaucracy. Prussia henceforth was to be a nation of men and women whose one duty was to obey. It was the first systematic attempt to turn a nation into a machine to produce soldiers. Frederick William left his son a standing army of 80,000 ; before his time it had been customary to dismiss the troops when a war was over. In comparison with the population of the state, this was the largest army in Europe. Even France, many times as large a territory, had only 160,000 men.

The pathetic picture of the soul of this preposterous King of Prussia is revealed in the will which he left as his advice to his son and successor. One can

detect all through it the reminiscence of speeches that come from Berlin to-day. That is the curse of the Hohenzollerns—they never learn to be better than their forefathers. After announcing his profound sense of co-operation with the Almighty, Frederick William proceeds to tell his son the secrets of successful kingship : he must not keep mistresses, or theatrical companies, or a good cook, or a large wine-cellar. It is the ideal of the lay preacher of a village chapel. But even these supreme virtues are as nothing to that final triumph of a throne—a standing army. If his son will not spend as much on his army as his father spent, then “ May the curse which God laid on Pharaoh fall on you ; may your fate be that of Absalom ! . . . Your task, my dear successor, is to keep up what your fathers have begun and to win the territories claimed by us, which belong to our House by the laws of God and men. Pray to God, and never begin an unjust war ; but never relinquish what is justly yours ! ”

There is plenty of shrewd comment on political economy in this Will, and plenty of highly commendable advice to work hard in the service of the country ; but take it all in all, it is the word of a man who believed that a people can be court-martialled into righteousness, and that a state can be bullied into order. In the eyes of the kings of Prussia, their people are henceforth to be driven along the right road, as a shepherd (or a butcher) drives sheep. Indeed his people never quite knew whether it was a shepherd or a butcher that drove them. Frederick William, with the true instinct of a Hohenzollern, thought he could even cane them into loving him, as he could thrash them into anything else. “ You have no right to

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fear me, do you hear? You must love me," the King shouted after a subject who was fleeing from his presence; and when he caught him Frederick William flogged the terrified man with his cane.

It has not been generally realised that the first great triumph of the Prussian system was over the soul and freedom of Frederick the Great. He was the first victim of the Prussian bureaucracy. That is the supreme irony of the history of this nation. Frederick was quite a well-disposed fellow, who would appear to have taken after his mother rather than his Hohenzollern father. Like his witty sister, he was really capable of better things than the succession to a Prussian throne. He inclined naturally to the graces of civilisation; the manner of the French suited him better than the crudity of the ponderous Germans. He always wrote in French, and could never spell in German to his dying day; indeed he could scarcely speak it.

Imagine the state of mind of Frederick William when he realised that his son preferred Voltaire and music to drill-books and drums. The son, on his side, made up his mind when he was eighteen that the Prussian court was an intolerable place for an educated man; so he planned an escape to his mother's home in England. It was all arranged with the assistance of one of his friends, a military officer, when the King discovered the plot. His first intention, being a Hohenzollern, was to execute his son. However, the Emperor begged for mercy; so Frederick William shut his rebellious son into a castle, and contented himself with having the accomplice beheaded in the yard before his son's prison window. Such was the level of Prussian civilisation in 1730.

Frederick the Great was beaten by the Prussian system ; he was bullied until he became, like the rest, a cog in the Hohenzollern machinery. All through his career one sees his better nature peeping out, but in truth he was really a whipped hound following a master beyond his will. What he might have been we know from Voltaire after their first meeting in the year 1740 (it was the year when Frederick came to the throne, at the age of twenty-eight) : “ I saw one of the amiablest men in the world, who forms the charm of society, who would be everywhere sought after if he were not King ; a philosopher without austerity ; full of sweetness, complaisance and obliging ways. . . . I needed an effort of memory to recollect that I here saw sitting at the foot of my bed a Sovereign who had an army of 100,000 men.”

That was the fatal legacy that Frederick had inherited from his father—a standing army which for those days was in size a phenomenon in Europe. His father had been the laughing-stock of his time, as the man who spent his life drilling an army which he never used in battle. It was Frederick’s fate to lead that army to its destiny. He wasted his substance in riotous militarism, as the son of a miser wastes his father’s gold in riotous living. He made himself the most famous general of his age—and a man who could make a reputation with a Prussian army was certainly a genius. It was a machine without intelligence ; it was always liable to desert wholesale in the presence of the enemy. One whole section actually vanished completely at Breslau. Voltaire’s “ amiablest man ” had been bullied into Prussianism with thoroughness ; and we find him writing to his brother, after a lost

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battle, instructing him how to get better results out of his soldiers : "Teach them to respect the stick."

The general history of Frederick's reign does not concern us for the present purpose. Suffice it to note that he more than doubled the size of his father's standing army ; and without the slightest compunction set to work, seizing as much of his neighbours' lands as he could win by brute force. It is amusing to recall that the first request Frederick made of Voltaire when they met in 1740 was that the latter should draft a manifesto to the people of the town of Liège, demanding a subsidy from them. It was a triumph for the Prussian system that it compelled even Frederick to ask a French philosopher to do it service. Even the most cynical diplomatists of that cynical age were shocked at the contemptuous disregard Frederick showed for the honour and decencies of international relationships. But there is one thing to be said to his great credit. He did not pose as the champion and friend of the Deity : on the contrary, he openly laughed at the bare idea of anyone—"even women," he added—fighting for religious principles at that time of the world's progress.

But there are one or two smaller points about his reign which reminds one of later days. His regiments fought in close formation, with the most appalling loss of life. The troops began to grumble ; and Frederick forbade the officials to publish the true figures of the losses. When he was beaten at Kunersdorf, he himself wrote that he was more afraid of his own men than of the enemy. It is also noteworthy that the Prussian machine did not turn out one other famous general to assist Frederick in his work. It was very rarely that the Prussian army won a battle,

except when led by the man who had sufficient taste to prefer the French.

The ambition of the Prussian nation was now aroused. Frederick the Great had, by the addition of Silesia and part of Poland, increased the subjects of the monarchy from a little over two million to six million inhabitants. Prussia was now face to face with Austria in rivalry for the leadership of the German Empire. Military conquest seemed the only conceivable outlet to the Prussian rulers. Frederick, with all his love of the new French philosophy, did little else for his people except rule them after the manners of the drill sergeant. Philosophy and freedom had to give way to the military situation. He was just and sincere and undoubtedly brilliant. But wriggle as he might, he was firmly in the grip of the Prussian military bureaucracy; and when he died in 1788 his country was more or less an armed camp.

With Prussia firmly in the groove of militarism, which has kept it in one steady line to the present time, we can skip forward to the events which more directly led up to the position as it exists to-day. It is interesting to note in passing that the first time the Prussian army came up against a military genius, Napoleon, fighting with an army that had freedom and a national inspiration, the machine-trained army went down in disorder. The French crushed the Prussians at Jena and Auerstadt in two of the brilliant battles of history. The Teutons with their pedantry collapsed utterly before Latin intelligence. In the latter fight the Prussians were superior in every arm, in guns, cavalry and infantry, and the French on this occasion were not led by Napoleon. After these two battles the whole of Prussia was but a

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row of ninepins against Napoleon's skill, and Berlin was his seat of war until his restless ambition took him elsewhere. Even when, eight years afterwards, the French Emperor had attempted the impossible, and was succumbing to the inevitable, he still could turn on the Prussian Blücher at Champaubert, Montmirail and Vauchamps, and demonstrate the difference between French brilliancy when faced by the heavy Prussian machine with a superior force.

The German Empire had once consisted of over three hundred states. When it emerged from the Napoleonic whirlpool, only thirty-nine had survived the ordeal. The very name of the Empire had disappeared; for the Emperor Francis had sufficient sense of humour to see that it was ridiculous to call himself Emperor of Germany when most of it belonged to the Emperor of France. Even when Napoleon was beaten, Francis refused to take back his old title, which was a very shadowy one in any case. The German states, kings, electors and free cities, thereupon determined to reform themselves, not as suzerain states under an emperor, but as federal equals under a Diet representing the new German Confederation. This was a clear strengthening of the position of Prussia. For under the older system it had been formally under the leadership of Austria, whose archdukes had gradually won an hereditary right to the Imperial crown.

The struggle between Prussia and Austria had begun long ago. Frederick the Great had formed the Fürstenbund, or League of Princes, with the deliberate intention of challenging the leadership of Austria. Henceforth, from the time that the German Confederation was recognised by the great Congress of Vienna (which cleared

up the rubbish-heap of Europe in 1815, after Napoleon's defeat) that rivalry was to proceed on more equal terms.

The Prussian army had gone down like a broken reed before the revolutionary French ; and it was only when the Spaniards broke into revolt against Napoleon's nominee that the Germans had begun to pluck up heart. Scharnhorst had taken the first steps in reorganising the Prussian army, and, under Blücher, it had played a prominent part in the final overthrow of Napoleon. This Prussian boor, the typical land-owning noble of his country, without manners or culture, possessing merely a rough honesty which determined that his country should be independent of the French, is as the sign and symbol of the old Prussia which Frederick William I. had created so firmly. He was not a great military tactician ; his strength was rather a kind of savage energy which plunged straight on, a quality which won him his title of " Marshal Forward." When he marched into Paris with the Allies after the battle of Waterloo, it was only the influence of the Duke of Wellington that restrained this hooligan Prussian from giving the city over to pillage and ruin.

One reverts to him here as an indication of the kind of men who were in control of Prussia when it began its new life under the German Confederation. Although it was the German people who had won their national freedom from France, the German princes had no intention that these people should win their own freedom as well. Or it would be more correct to say that the rulers of Prussia had no such intention. For the half-century which followed the French Revolution a rather blind instinct for democratic liberty was

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struggling in the German states. In the southern and western principalities, where there was much Celtic blood, and where their princes were not Hohenzollerns, and their lords were not Prussian squires, this movement had considerable success. Democracy in Germany has generally been rather a half-hearted affair, for the Teuton gives way to the autocrat and the bureaucrat by nature, as a sheep gives way to a dog. Nevertheless the southern states, particularly when inspired by the greater vigour of the French in 1830 and 1848, won constitutions of a sort, assisted by the good will of such men as the cultured Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar.

But Prussia set the example of autocracy and practically bullied the more civilised states into resisting progress. However, it did not require much pressure to convince personages of the calibre of the King of Saxony, a monarch who was so impressed by his own importance that he never walked in a street nor permitted himself to speak to anyone below the rank of a colonel. But it must be admitted that the standard of the "national freedom" party was not of a very high order of intelligence. One of its leaders, for example, was a Prussian peasant, Jahn, who attached much importance to going about without a linen collar, which he considered "French" and unpatriotic; while his favourite method of rousing the pupils of his gymnasium class to high thinking was by boxing their ears. The Prussian mind has always believed in physical force—or at least it has never been able to conceive of anything more effective.

But the revolutionary spirit of 1848 shook even the ponderous body of the Prussian Government. Since the revival of the army under Blücher and his fellow-boors,

Prussia was more than ever intolerable for decent people. Heine has drawn the picture of its tyranny with his acid pen : " About the time that the sun of the July Revolution arose in France, I had gradually become very weary, and needed recreation. Moreover the air of my native land was daily becoming more unwholesome for me, and I was compelled to contemplate seriously a change of climate. I had visions ; in the clouds I saw all sorts of horrible, grotesque faces, that annoyed me with their grimaces. It sometimes seemed to me as if the sun were a Prussian cockade. . . . I had become acquainted with an old magistrate from Berlin who had spent many years in the fortress of Spandau, and who described to me how unpleasant it was in winter to wear iron manacles. . . . I asked my magistrate if oysters were often served at Spandau. He answered no ; Spandau was too far from the sea. Meat also, he said, was seldom to be had, and the only fowls were the flies which fell into one's soup." So Heine decided to go to Paris, " the fatherland of champagne and the ' Marseillaise.' "

It was a fierce revenge that Heine took on the Prussian boors. One can only nestle the hope that once in a way they read good literature and so saw themselves at last. But the pathetic thing is that irony is not understood of the lower animals. When Heine got to Paris it was a change of worlds, he tells us : " The men were all so polite, and the pretty women all smiled so graciously. If someone accidentally jostled me without immediately asking pardon, I could wager safely that it was a fellow-countryman."

All the history books in the world will not get us nearer to the heart of the Prussian nation than these

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words from Heine. They tell us more than the clauses of all their laws and treaties—whether the ones they keep or the ones they break. But the dull gentlemen in Berlin continued to bore their way on to more guns and more bureaucracy. The revolution of 1848 filled the streets of Berlin with people who, by some temporary miracle, had risen against Prussian autocracy at last. The King got frightened, and made many promises ; and when he found that the army was thoroughly loyal, and would turn out of its assembly room any parliament that disagreed with his wishes, then he granted a constitution that looked fairly well on paper, but came to nothing in practice. The power still remained in the hands of the army and the bureaucracy.

So much for the internal affairs of Prussia. Concerning its position as a member of the German Confederation, here likewise the revolution of 1848 had appeared, in the form of a demand (mainly on the part of a band of somewhat dreamy literary persons) for a united Germany, under a constitutional national parliament. The enthusiasts summoned to Frankfort a preliminary assembly to talk the matter over. A proposal to make the King of Prussia provisional head of the United Government was, at first, received with “general laughter.” The idea of a reforming assembly putting Prussia in power appealed to the delegates’ sense of humour. But when they got to business it was seen that if there was to be a united Germany at all, either the Emperor of Austria or the King of Prussia had to be the head. When a vote was taken, the Prussian party won by a small majority, the republican element among the deputies voting with the Austrian party.

But it was one thing to offer to make the King of Prussia the Emperor of Germany, and quite another to make him accept the post. Badly though he wanted this pleasant position, it was not to be expected that an autocrat of Prussia would demean himself by accepting anything from a popular assembly—which even smelt of revolution! So he haughtily replied that he could accept such an offer only from his peers, the princes of Germany, not from their subjects: “If it be desirable to bestow a crown on the German nation, it is myself and my equals who will give it.” And so the true Prussian spirit lost him the Empire for a time. When he turned to his “equals,” he quickly found that the strongest of them would not have him for their Emperor on any consideration.

Thereupon the deputies decided to go on with their national parliament without the squabbling princes. This led to republican insurrections all over the Confederation; and the Prussian army undertook the congenial work of suppressing the democrats by force. Then feeling pleased with his success, the King of Prussia tried to organise a group of states under his own control. Austria replied by offering to accept a constitution wherein Austria, Prussia and the rest of Germany would be represented in the popular parliament in equal thirds. Since nothing repels the Prussian mind so much as the thought of equality, the proposal was refused. To escape from the deadlock, Austria proposed to reinstitute the old Diet of the Confederation. Prussia looked like risking a war and went on with its own plan. But it was quickly seen that it would have no friends if it came to war, since one by

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one the rest of the states went over to the Austrian plan.

So Prussia discreetly gave way ; and the Diet met again in 1851. It was clear that Austria and Prussia must soon settle definitely which was supreme in the German Confederation. A mutual agreement to rule Germany between them could hold no longer ; Schwarzenberg, the Austrian premier, made up his mind to obtain complete power for his country ; while the Prussian deputy, Bismarck, was equally determined to win that power for his own master.

The first object of Bismarck's political career was to drive Austria out of Germany, thereby clearing the way for the supremacy of Prussia over the whole Confederation. Bismarck arrived at a lucky moment ; for, left to himself, William of Prussia, who became regent in 1858, when his brother, King Frederick William IV., became hopelessly mad, would have quickly given all the cards into the hand of the Austrians. William had most of the disqualifications for successful ruling ; he was honest, pious, and about a century behind contemporary thought. No one could accuse Bismarck of any of these virtues ; and he had a brain such as is rarely reared amongst the Prussian squires. He was also somewhat unique in that class, as having possessed many personal charms, and eyes that were very fascinating. Incidentally, he was by nature a gentleman, and not a Prussian.

When William took command of the throne, he soon found himself tied into disagreeable constitutional knots. He had already made up his mind, as a true Hohenzollern, that the best way of controlling all Germany was to form a strong army ; and he drew up

a scheme for a large increase. However, the Prussian Parliament, in which still smouldered some of the modern thinking of 1848, had no desire to vote any money for this military purpose. The King's first impulse, when he ascended the throne in 1861, was immediately to revise the constitution until it suited his old-fashioned views. But Bismarck suggested that things were not done in that way in the nineteenth century. So William left the constitution as it was and ignored it, thereby saving much unnecessary trouble and disturbance. He made Bismarck his chief minister in 1862; and the Parliament was calmly told that if it would not vote the money for the larger army, then the Crown would raise the money without its permission. This is a good test of the political age of Prussia. England was going through the same trouble with Charles Stuart almost exactly two hundred years before.

William and Bismarck were as bad as their word. They raised the money and the army as they declared they would, and Parliament was left pondering over its beautiful theoretical powers. The two despots had already invented the term "blood and iron" as their guiding principle in public life (they are a genial lot, these Prussians!), and Bismarck openly stated that there was no other way in which the unity of Germany could be attained. In other words, Austria had to be beaten down by force. In 1864 Prussia and Austria together declared war on Denmark in defence of the rights of Schleswig and Holstein to be independent of Denmark if they wished. At least that was the excuse. Bismarck led Austria into this trap, but he had made up his mind to keep all the spoil, and for Prussia alone. So he quickly

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found a pretence for quarrelling. Austria was temporarily governing one of the occupied provinces and Prussia the other. Austria allowed the people in its district to hold public political meetings in favour of settling their own affairs. Prussia strongly objected to such liberality, and the Austrian governor replied that he, at least, had no intention of governing like a Turkish pasha. Which would have been an unkind remark for Prussia if it had nerves or wits. Thereupon Prussia seized the Austrian province, on the excuse that revolutionary ideas were being sown. The Diet declared that Austria was within its rights. But Bismarck did not care who was right. He had an army behind strong enough to allow him to do as he pleased ; and to smash Austria as well, if, as he hoped, it would fight.

Such brutal callousness, when he had professed to be defending the liberties of these small states, shocked Prussia even, as well as the rest of Germany. "Austria is not ready : it will be all over in one battle," was Bismarck's calm remark ; and he continued to let loose his police on Schleswig until he had bullied the people into submission. When the Diet declared against him, he withdrew Prussia from the Confederation and got ready for war with Austria.

It was one of the coldest-blooded military adventures in the history of civilised nations. Bismarck had trapped Austria into fighting over the succession to the throne of a little duchy hundreds of miles from the Austrian frontier. Whereas the real issue at stake was the sovereignty of the German-speaking peoples. The Austrians knew that Prussia would be ruthless the moment the army was strong enough to risk a war ;

for that reason it was impossible to allow such an addition of military strength as would follow the annexation of Schleswig-Holstein. That is the supreme emotion of a German conqueror—every acre will add so many more men to the army. Bismarck practically admitted that such was in his mind when he offered to allow the local Duke of Augustenburg to rule over the disputed territory, if he would allow his duchy to be included under the military rule of Prussia.

Now that it had come to the verge of war, what the Germans thought of their Prussian neighbour is revealed by the fact that only a few weak northern states declared themselves on the Prussian side of the dispute. The only people who have ever been persuaded to love Prussia are those who have only a small army—on the same principle that one never loves a mad dog unless one has a big stick. All the larger German kingdoms—Bavaria, Saxony, Würtemberg and Hanover—were on the side of Austria; and also the smaller states of Baden, Hesse Darmstadt, Nassau and Hesse Cassel.

But the strength of Bismarck lay in the fact that although he took full advantage of the historical Prussian quality of brute force, yet at heart he really believed in diplomacy more than gunpowder. As noted above, he was essentially a gentleman with brains, but like poor Frederick the Great he had been bullied into the national system. At this crisis in affairs he startled the Confederation by the last piece of diplomacy that anybody would have imagined possible from a Prussian statesman. Knowing that almost all Germany regarded Prussia as a bully in the matter of Schleswig-Holstein,

Bismarck saw that he was playing into the hands of the enemy if he fought on that issue.

So with the unexpected qualities of a thunderbolt he suddenly announced that Prussia was in favour of a popular chamber, elected by universal suffrage, to take its place beside the existing Diet as the governing body of the German Confederation. The Liberals of Germany regarded this apparition of democracy with the same hesitation as Little Red Riding Hood observed the large size of her grandmother's teeth. The disguise was too obvious ; and Prussia had to rely on its own army when war with Austria was declared in 1866.

The war lords of Prussia were perfectly sound in their judgment. Within three days they had seized the capitals of the chief states that had dared to oppose them in North Germany. Within three weeks the Austrian army had been crushed at Sadowa. Within another three weeks the Prussian army was in sight of Vienna. That the capital city of Austria was never entered was due to a truly remarkable combination of Bismarckian diplomacy and Prussian brutality. The autocrats of Berlin had already made up their minds to smash France at the earliest opportunity ; therefore, they argued, it would be advisable not to crush Austria so cruelly that it would be clamouring for revenge ! These Prussians are astounding ; they can think of no other possible use for gentleness except when it may lead to a better chance of more brutality.

For the moment all that Bismarck desired was to push Austria once and for all out of the German Confederation, so that henceforth it would be at the mercy of Prussia alone. Austria agreed to this, and Prussia

demanded nothing else ; neither monetary indemnity, nor an acre of territory ; except that Venetia was to be surrendered to Italy, as that country's reward for remaining neutral during the war. For a victorious Prussian army this was almost self-sacrifice.

The really important changes were to take place inside the German Confederation. Prussia annexed, as her own territory, Hanover, Nassau, Hesse Cassel and Frankfort. They were informed in a pompous Prussian proclamation that, having rejected an offer of neutrality, and having taken arms against Prussia, "the issue had gone against them by the decree of God." As a matter of fact, the issue had gone against them by decree of the new Prussian needle-gun which could fire five times while the older Austrian gun fired once. But, of course, the Prussians always like to drag in the Almighty whenever possible. It gives them confidence.

The larger German southern kingdoms the autocrats did not yet feel strong enough to seize ; for, as even the Prussian Parliament informed Bismarck, "mere force is not sufficient to-day as a basis for the foundation of states." So the King and Bismarck were contented by the formation of a North German Confederation, comprising all the twenty-two states north of the River Main, of which the King of Prussia was to be the president, with a Federal Council and a Parliament elected by manhood suffrage and secret ballot. On the surface it looked very democratic. In truth it was the first real step toward the triumph of Prussian autocracy in Germany.

The southern states of Bavaria, Saxony, Baden and Würtemberg, and part of Hesse Darmstadt, still

remained free. But Bismarck had soon persuaded them to form a military alliance with the North German Confederation, on the plea that they must guard themselves against the ambitious scheming of the Emperor Napoleon.

There are one or two side issues in this struggle with Austria that are interesting in the light of subsequent events. At that time Prussia was in the hands of a diplomatist of genius. It was only on the surface, as it were, that Austria was beaten by force of arms. Really, the battle was won by brilliant diplomacy. With the dainty touch of a mistress's hand, the Prussian Bismarck lulled Napoleon to sleep with the assurance that a civil war between the German states would really strengthen France by their divisions. Italy, as we have seen, was already bribed by the promise of Venice. In short, before he went to war Bismarck arranged that he would have scarcely anyone to fight. In the War of 1914 Prussian methods have somewhat changed. Again, there is another point of comparison. It was Bismarck who then invented the diplomatic method of threatening to rouse somebody or other to turn against their friends in the back. Thus he threatened Austria that if it did not accept the Prussian terms he would rouse the kingdom of Hungary to start a war of Magyar against Teuton. He told Russia that interference on its part would be revenged by arousing the Poles. In 1914 we are given to understand that German diplomatists can stir up rebellions from the Himalayas to Morocco, from Ireland to Cape Town. There is one advantage about the Prussian mind. It has a clinging attachment to the methods of its ancestors. Most of them date from the earliest period of European history.

The German Empire was not yet complete. A war with Austria had won only half the battle. Bismarck now deliberately turned to the business of stirring up a war with France. On this side he had a better case, for under the flitting brain of the Emperor Louis Napoleon France was a plausible danger to Germany. But Bismarck was not really very seriously concerned about a French invasion, of which he was shrewdly aware there was little real danger. He went to war with France in cold blood, because he believed that the only way to consolidate the German people was to unite them in a successful foreign campaign. Once more he made every diplomatic arrangement, so that France would fight alone ; and once more he left no stone unturned to make the war inevitable beyond any possibility of a compromise without the appeal to arms.

The quarrel was picked over a very dry bone, and the audacious nature of Bismarck's methods would be beyond belief except in the history of Prussia. But the subject will be discussed more conveniently in the chapter on France ; and, assuming for the moment that the Franco-German War of 1870-1871 is over, we will continue the internal history of Germany from the time of the signing of the peace.

There now opens an almost entirely new phase of German history. Bismarck's plan had completely succeeded. Filled with national pride of having beaten France, the German princes decided to unite. In the palace of Versailles—that is, on the very scene of their war triumph—the independent southern states saluted King William of Prussia as German Emperor in January 1871. In other words, he was made president of a Con-

federation which now included all the German-speaking states (except the Austrian provinces) which had once formed the main centre of the older German Empire ; which in turn had been the more or less legitimate successor to the still older, and still greater, Empire of Rome. Each state was to retain its own local independence, in so far as it was not merged in the general powers entrusted to the Emperor and the Imperial Parliament.

But, be it noted, this ceremony in Versailles was an autocratic act, decided by the princes themselves without consulting their respective peoples. When democratic Italy considered the matter of its unity, it had been decided by a popular vote of each state concerned. But in Teutonic lands democracy is more of a superstition than a fact. It has crept into popular school histories, one scarcely knows how. However; the princes did not surrender their headship to Prussia without more than a qualm. But as Bismarck calmly told the King of Bavaria, he and the other minor kings would be in less danger from a formally constituted Emperor than from an unrestrained King of Prussia whose superiority rested on the brute force of his army. Which was candid, but also true. In fact Prussia's claim on the allegiance of Germany was based on force, as has been the case in every other claim she has ever made in history. The conception of military despotism is her contribution to mankind. When the four southern princes got home they placed the scheme of the new Empire before their people, in so far as these had any say in the government. Their action was confirmed without any practical opposition, except that in the case of Bavaria there

was a substantial patriotic anti-Prussian party drawn from the Catholic rural districts.

Almost coincident with this foundation of the Empire begins that new phase of Germany; which has not changed its military character, but has added thereto another element; with the result that the German Empire is one of the most remarkable objects in history. It is still the greatest antediluvian nation in the world, so far as it is the most complete example of a barbarism based on force. The German army is still the oldest survival of the Dark Ages. But the Empire is also the most remarkable expression of the latest development of Trade and Commerce. Force and Trade work side by side in as remarkable a combination as if one tied a Barbary pirate to Mr Andrew Carnegie and sent them through life together. It is this alliance between organised soldiers and organised traders that makes the German Empire unique as a modern Great Power. It has happened to a degree in almost all great modern states: in that most modern armies are more or less at the disposal of the plutocrats who control their governments. But nowhere has the alliance been carried so far as in Germany. The foundation laid so firmly by the early Fredericks and Frederick Williams, and so admirably advertised to the whole world by Frederick the Great's showy career, has remained.

When Bismarck, under the trading name of William I., Emperor of Germany, started out to develop the internal life of the country for which he had built such a stately house, he found in his hands a nation of people for whom obedience to authority was second nature. Prussia, and through it Germany, has been drilled

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into industrialism as it was earlier drilled into an army. Those who know German trade tell us that on every hand there is a want of personal initiative and a senseless waste of time in a mass of unessential details. No one does anything in Germany unless an official of a higher grade has ordered it to be done. Closely allied with the development of trade has gone a naturally coincident development of municipal and local government. Here, again, the whole structure depends on a basis of bureaucracy. Things certainly get done up to a point in Germany ; but every year it is more apparent that it is by a dangerous sacrifice of the individual unit. Germany is a well-kept sheepfold ; but wise men will ask whether it is the aim of governments to grow healthy sheep. There are many signs that, since Germany has given its soul during the last forty years to officials who have sucked up the little free life that the army officers had left, the standard of its intellectual life has greatly deteriorated. Scientists, philosophers, artists are giving place to men like General von Bernhardt, the apostles of the buffoonery of military clowns. Even Frederick the Great was the patron of Bach, and gave him a theme for one of his finest fugues. One never heard of the Emperor William II. giving to the world of Art cause for anything but shrieks of laughter.

The change from the most old-fashioned great nation in Europe to the highly strung industrial and social instrument that Germany is to-day, has taken place in the forty odd years since the Germans marched on Paris. It is almost as if, like their ancestors, they had marched on Rome, and come back with a knowledge of a new world. The change has been instantaneous, as the

history of the world is measured. This is not the place to set down tables of the economic growth of the Rhenish Provinces, of Saxony, of Silesia. The growth of German shipping, the persistent energy of German traders all over the earth, all these things are the commonplaces of everyday knowledge.

The fact, which, at the first glance, seems so astonishing, is that the purely feudal and aristocratic and military monarchy which the Fredericks left to their successors should have entered into the work of organising trade with such extraordinary zeal. It is surely in the nature of the miraculous that Bismarck, the representative of Prussian junkers and army officers, should be held up to Europe (with justice, too) as the pioneer of State railways and the founder of State Insurance for the working classes. Now Bismarck really stood beyond the ordinary historical and psychological rules. He might very well have done one thing while all Germany wanted to do something entirely different. He was not typical of the Prussian mind. He was too much of a gentleman, and although he talked a great deal about blood and iron, as a matter of fact his chief strength was his incomparable skill in psychological analysis of the motives and desires of his fellow-men. Metternich had laughed to scorn the idea of paying any attention to public opinion: whereas Bismarck nursed it tenderly.

We must always remember that Bismarck was not an Imperialist in the sense in which that word is used to-day. When Germany began its colonial career in 1884, by undertaking the protectorate of Angra Pequena in South-West Africa, to be soon followed by the occupation of Togo and the Cameroons, and then German East

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Africa, it was not a movement that seemed to owe much of its inspiration to Bismarck. He never showed any sign of being willing to sacrifice his European diplomacy for the sake of acquiring colonies. Incidentally it may be noted that Bismarck was skilful enough to win colonies without continually talking about the mighty strength of the German fleet. For in his time Germany had no fleet worth mentioning. Bismarck probably was clever enough to see that they might build up quite a large colonial empire, so long as they proceeded as peaceful traders and not as armed raiders. He had not the mind which insists on the acquisition of square miles regardless of expense.

Bismarck was even opposed to demanding that Metz should be included in the territory surrendered by the French after the war of 1870-1871; it was his generals who drove him to include this district, on the plea that it was worth a hundred thousand men in a war with France. Once he had gained his unity and power within the German Confederation, Bismarck would apparently have been content to live at peace with other races.

Yet Bismarck was the Prussian in methods, though he was not the typical Prussian in aim. When he was faced by the growth of militant democracy, chiefly under the guise of Socialism, he attempted to crush it by police methods. He seized with unscrupulous energy the opportunity given him by some silly attempts on the life of the old Emperor William in 1878; he said they were the direct fruit of Socialist propaganda; and he made the Parliament pass laws that crushed the freedom of speech and political combinations. Like other autocrats

of Prussia, Bismarck found it intolerable that subjects should be free men.

When, on the other hand, he was perfectly prepared to dole out such social reform as State Insurance for the working classes, he was equally acting up to the strictest theory of the Prussian bureaucracy. Frederick the Great had enacted: "It is the duty of the State to provide for the sustenance and support of those citizens who cannot procure sustenance themselves." In the minds of rulers who regarded a citizen mainly as a possible soldier, it was quite natural that these soldiers should be provided for out of barracks as well as inside. Bismarck wished to make such aids of working-class insurance purely as State grants; he did not want the workers to be asked to pay any contributions out of their own pockets. He said if he were only allowed to make tobacco a State monopoly he would regard it as "the patrimony of the disinherited," and pay all insurance out of its revenue. But here he went beyond the possibilities of public opinion, and the monopoly was refused by Parliament. The various industrial insurance laws were therefore enacted in the forms which are now too well known by their extension to Great Britain. Working-class reform as conceived by a Prussian partakes of the feeding of inferior animals by superior shepherds. It is the business of Teutonic people to open their mouths until the bureaucratic spoon is placed therein.

But it was unlikely that the Hohenzollerns would long tolerate being under the orders of such a civilised master as Bismarck. A true branch of the Prussian stock appeared on the scene. When William II. ascended the throne in 1888 the world had the unusual spectacle of a

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tenth-century tribal ruler seated on a twentieth-century throne. The history of his reign has been the strange jumble of events that one might imagine would result from such a dangerous social mixture. On a throne of modern Europe we see a monarch who regards the world as made to be sacked and conquered by the nation that has the most soldiers. In the mind of Bismarck there was little beyond the legitimate desire to unify the German people. William II. is not restrained by any race impulse. He wants to have under his sway just as many peoples as he can conquer by his arms. The ideal of an Empire of the Germans has given way to the ideal of a World Empire. There is, of course, nothing new in such an idea—no one would accuse a Prussian of originality. Alexander the Great, Napoleon, and the inmates of every asylum in Christendom have dreamed that dream. The noteworthy point is the brutal method employed for its realisation, and the fact that this method is now no longer fashionable in respectable society.

Of course the conquering army is only the old ideal of Frederick I. But in the case of the navy a new element comes upon the scene. The Prussian army was originally, and still is, largely, an instrument of the aristocracy. It represented the society of the Prussian land-owner, the descendant of the Teutonic knights.

But the navy represents a new social element in Germany. It represents the new men of commerce who have sprung up like mushrooms in the new Germany of the last forty years. The army officer is still almost purely an aristocrat. Such men as Admiral Von Tirpitz and Vice-Admiral Von Ingenohl, the chiefs of the German navy, have come direct from the tradesman class. Their

aristocratic "von" is merely a very recent gift from their friend, the German Emperor: it is the symbol of the new alliance. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of this fact. The navy, far more than the army, is the expression of the militant German dream of a World Empire: and the navy represents the new trading class of Germany.

Further, the navy is the special pet of the Emperor William. It is purely an Imperial service, not like the army, which is theoretically the property, as it were, of all the states. The navy is the expression in material form of the new alliance between the Prussian autocrat and the German capitalist; and it is this combination between the fighting man and the trading man which makes the German Empire so unique. This is the really original thing that William II. has done. He has brought the whole power of trade into a hand-in-hand alliance with the sword. It is a commonplace that the lords of finance and commerce have been behind most of the modern wars. It has been left for William the Prussian to organise the alliance with the rigid attention to detail which one would expect from a Teutonic bureaucrat. Once more bureaucracy has triumphed. It has organised the use of Force on a wider basis than ever before. In the old days the trader saw as little of the man-of-arms as he conveniently could. They were opponents in the world. William II. has won the traders over to be the chief supporters of the professional fighting men.

In a sense which Bismarck never understood, "blood and iron" is still the best expression of Germany's policy. The blood of the old fighting aristocrats is now in alliance

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with the iron of the forges of Essen and the shipyards of Kiel. Aristocracy and commerce have linked themselves together as the apostles of the doctrine of Brute Force. It is the final triumph of the Prussian mind. Bismarck always dreaded the capitalist; he at first tried to save the mediæval guilds from the assault of the modern manufacturer. It was the last wriggle of the freer social system that knew not the "great finance." But William II. has made the great capitalists his dearest friends. The Krupps and the Ballins guide his Empire.

It is not very necessary to give much attention to the person of the monarch who has brought about this condition of affairs in Germany. The chief point about Prussia is that it has almost extinguished personality. Two sentences from William II.'s speeches are sufficient to classify him: "Only one is master in this country. That is I. Who opposes me I shall crush to pieces"; "We Hohenzollerns take our crown from God alone, and to God alone we are responsible in the fulfilment of our duty." A man who talks like that in the twentieth century need not be considered as an individual. It is clear that he cannot be regarded as of any personal intelligence. Such power as he possesses he must owe to some external force. He is, indeed, the expression of Prussian ideals. He is the final product and the chief of Prussian autocracy and bureaucracy. Frederick the Great tried to resist capture by flight, as we have seen; William II. is all unconsciously the ignominious slave of a system; a part of a vast social machinery which it amuses him to imagine he controls. He is the one man in the world, above all others, who has utterly lost his individuality. He is the central cog of the Prussian machine.

IV : FRANCE

THE history of France is the story of an attempt to avoid most of the mistakes into which the Prussians fell. The charm of French history is that the attempt has been generally successful. France is most things that Prussia is not. It would be almost impossible to exaggerate the width of the historical and psychological valley which separates the two nations. They have been travelling to the two opposite poles of human endeavour. Just take a contemporary moment at a critical time of their maturity. When the French had suddenly decided to have the great Revolution of the end of the eighteenth century, the Prussians had just decided to sell themselves body and soul to the worst military bureaucracy in history. It is not that the French Revolution was by any means a success in wisdom. A bourgeois government was on the whole worse than an aristocratic one. But the Revolution showed that admirable spirit of trying to get a better government than they had already. Prussia has always been contented with the rulers Providence has given it. The French have continually challenged the decisions of Providence. But nations must be judged by their centuries—not by their moments of convulsions. The virtue of the French is that, as a rule, they succeed in living up to their convulsions.

The civilised history of France goes back to a time long

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before Prussia was mentioned in polite society. Rome has been the civilising factor in Western Europe ; and France was a responsible, well-trained child before the Roman Empire had been gathered to its illustrious fathers ; whereas Prussia was in the nature of an orphan whose both parents had died at childbirth ; and the Prussian baby grew up the neglected scamp of Europe.

For all practical historical purposes we can say that the first dominant race-stock in France was the western end of that great " Alpine " family which stretched all along the central backbone of Europe. On the south coast there was probably a population of the Mediterranean race in some numbers. But the Alpine race peoples were the core of the ethnological situation. It was the blending of this Alpine race with a northern or Teutonic stock, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Rhenish provinces, that probably produced that particularly virile human family for which the word " Celts " has become the most convenient term. It was these Celts who were in chief power in the French lands when the Romans arrived. The Celts were not a centralised nation, of course ; but a collection of independent tribes, with sufficient unity and energy to scare Rome itself very badly between the 400-250 B.C. period.

Even before the Roman period the Greeks, working out from their colony of Marseilles, had given the French peoples of the south-east many useful suggestions ; while, from the 100 B.C. period, at latest, the Romans began to turn Gaul into a Roman province. The process was more or less complete by A.D. 250. It was by no means a crude and vicious conquest. The Romans were singularly gentle after their victories. They did

not want to ram their culture down anybody's throat. Forcible feeding of that sort is peculiarly a Prussian idea. Gaul, in the simple lower-form tutorial language of its conqueror, was at first divided into three parts, as a concession to the administrative sentiments of the Roman government. But, in fact, the Gauls continued to govern themselves, and only adopted Roman manners as they wished. Being an intelligent, peaceful people on the whole, they did wish to adopt many good ideas; and Gaul became the most peaceful and cultured of the provinces of Rome. The Romans took over the cruder trade of military protection from attacks by savages (namely Teutons); while the Gauls or Celts became a particularly peaceful people who were soon attracting the Romans themselves to their schools. Gaul became a peaceful agricultural community, with many beautiful towns built and governed after the latest Roman manner.

Gaul and its Celtic people appeared to be on the point of giving the world a civilisation altogether remarkable for its age. But it was suddenly interrupted by a disagreeable incident—the arrival of invading races of the pure Teuton stock, who poured over the Rhine in swarms of Goths, Vandals, Burgundians and Franks. It was the last-named tribe that made the longest stay and the deepest impression of all the Teuton peoples in Gaul. In 486 an army of Celtic-Roman blood and manners was defeated by the Frank chief, Clovis, near Soissons (a familiar name to-day); and for several centuries Gaul was subject to Teuton rule. Clovis's chief method of climbing to power was by the successful murder of all his rivals amongst the Frankish chiefs—an

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early application of the "blood and iron" theory so sacred in Germanic history.

But it was a superficial conquest. The rough Teutons could have no more effect on the civilised Gauls than a midnight burglar would have on the psychology of a philosopher at work in his study. There was a certain blending of bloods, especially in the north-east; but even in blood the Celts were not fundamentally affected. In mental affairs the Franks beat against the Celtic-Roman civilisation almost in vain. Of course the Roman State as a governing force disappeared; but the Church of Rome stood the shock of conquest practically unharmed, and saved in Gaul the essence and much of the anatomy of Roman culture. It was only by yielding to the Church of Rome, by becoming its convert, and gaining its assistance, that Clovis and his successors were able to build up their power so well.

But the *moral* of Clovis and his Merovingian family broke down under the strain of their sudden elevation in the social scale; just as most people's collapse when they undergo too sudden transitions. The Fredegondas and the Clotaires were an unmannerly lot, much given to assassination of their rivals. Their administration corrupted the whole body politic, specially their bishops. So whole crowds of Merovingians were swept away by the newer Teutonic-Frank family of Pepin and his son, Charles the Great, whose feat of reforming the Empire we have already noted. Charles was probably the most intelligent Teuton that the race produced until Bismarck. His rule in France, as elsewhere in his dominions, was of a civilising character. He attached more importance to brains than to spear-heads.

We have already noted how, from the break-up of his Empire, at the Treaty of Verdun, 843, the modern nation of France emerged as an independent state in Europe. We have now to recall how that independent nation further emerged in 987 from the Teutonic influence of the Franks by the election of Hugues Capet, Duke of the French, with Paris as his capital. He was the great-grandson of Robert, Count of Anjou, a man of somewhat doubtful race, but probably a Gallo-Roman. This ancestor had married a daughter of the royal house of Charles, and had built up his influence and territories by taking the leading part in the attempt to drive the latest Teutonic raiders, the Northmen, or Normans, out of Gaul. His family continued this useful national labour, and the rest of the nobles looked to it as their chief. So when the Carlovingian line died out in 987, Hugues Capet, the Duke of the French of that time, was chosen (at Noyon) by his fellow-peers as King of France.

It was the final severance of the Teutonic tie, symbolised by this shifting of the capital from the eastern or more Teutonic district of Laon to the more Roman-Gallic region of Paris; and it was another sign of the change that the chosen family should have made its reputation mainly by defeating Teutonic Northmen. It set the key of French history; which is the record of a successful attempt to keep France in the line of purer Celtic-Roman civilisation.

To describe the long process by which the chief lords of Paris, with at first a merely nominal superiority, gradually became the absolute monarchs of France, with all their feudal inferiors crushed out of local independence, is beyond our present purpose. The point

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which does call for attention is that it was not by mere brute force, by the creation of the biggest standing army in the country, that the kings of France strengthened their central government. They made themselves supreme by such peaceful methods as encouraging the growth of the towns, which counterbalanced the influence of the nobles. Again, the French nobles, on their side, more than in any country in Europe, were seized with the distinctly idealist desire to sacrifice their estates to the towns and the Crown (by mortgages) in order that they might set out to save Jerusalem from the Turks. Whatever one may think of the earlier Crusaders, they certainly had little of the self-seeking commercial instinct as their motive power. There was more than a touch of spiritual romance.

One cannot imagine the appearance in Prussian history of a St Louis, such as the man who ruled France between 1226-1270 ; and his absence from German history is no mere bad luck. He did not appear in Germany because the Teutonic spirit could no more produce a St Louis than a miracle. It is another example of the inevitable difficulty of growing grapes on thorns.

There must be no mistaken attempt to hero worship these French kings and their people. Judged by modern standards, even such as St Louis would seem most interfering persons, of intolerably despotic nature. Even that gentle king took a very prominent part in the early work of building up a centralised monarchy whose autocratic methods eventually needed the French Revolution as a wild attempt to counterbalance it. But judged as a whole, and by its ultimate results, the history of France has distinguished itself from the history of Prussia as the

development of a civilisation instead of a military state. If France had ever a despot it was Louis the Fourteenth ; yet within a few years of his death we find the French private soldiers treated more considerately than in any army of their period ; we even hear that it was a gibe of their opponents that in France it was the common soldiers, not the generals, who decided when it was seasonable for them to take the field. We hear of battles postponed because the soldiers preferred to go into winter quarters !

After all, one must judge by results. Louis XIV. of France did not create a despotism. On the contrary, he produced a French Revolution. That is the central fact of French history ; its rulers had been so generous in their rule that they had nurtured a people who were capable of the most stupendous democratic uprising the world has ever seen. As already remarked, it does not affect the essence of the argument to have to admit that the Revolution was not a success or wisely planned. The essential point is that the French were so free a people that they were capable of making the effort. The Prussians could no more produce a Revolution than a St Louis.

It is with the Revolution that we must begin to pick up a few of the historical threads from which the problem of to-day has been woven. The first thing to realise about the French Revolution is that the peasants and the people rose not because they were the most suppressed class in Europe, but, on the contrary, because they were probably the strongest and freest. Before a single aristocratic head fell under the guillotine, the French peasantry already owned at least a quarter of the soil of France.

Arthur Young puts it as high as one-third. It was a result that had been reached by the gradually accumulating democratic civilisation of the nation. There were, undoubtedly, tyrannies enough in France; tyrannies both of feudal lords and of the central monarchs. There were all sorts of petty exactions and rights; rights of the aristocrats to have all the fun of sport, for example; the obligation on the peasants to take all their corn to be ground in the lord's manorial mill. There were the more serious powers of the Central Government to arrest anyone it pleased and keep the victims in prison without trial at the pleasure of the king, or, still worse, of his local police constable.

But add up the tyrannies in France as one legitimately may, one only makes a better case for the strength of French democracy; for the people rose—that is the central fact. The first great Revolution happened in France because the sense of liberty was there so buoyant that they could not even surrender their right to shoot foxes and to hunt game. It was because the French were so prosperous by the time of Louis XIV. that the Revolution began then. Compared with the degraded Prussian serf of that period, the French peasant was an aristocrat. It was because the French democracy realised its strength that the crash came. Germany owes its historical freedom from great revolutions to the degradation of its peoples, not to their liberty.

It is interesting to remember what happened when the democracy began its demands in 1789. The old feudal rights were cancelled with scarcely a murmur. Indeed it was on the motion of the aristocrats in the National Assembly that their more personal rights over the

peasants were taken away without compensation. The French nobles had not petted Voltaire and Rousseau without picking up new ideas concerning social behaviour. The chief blunder of the revolutionaries of 1789 was in imagining that the nobles were their worst enemies. The real foe was the Central Monarchy. It was the bureaucracy of the Crown, and especially of Louis XIV., that had sucked the national wealth. Above all, it was the allurements and extravagance of Louis's Court that had drawn the nobles to Versailles, there to waste their rents in endless luxury. To save themselves from bankruptcy they wrung from their peasants the last penny they could claim under feudal rights that had been almost forgotten.

But even the pompous ceremonies of the Court of Louis XIV. had a touch of refinement about them when one turns in comparison to the contemporary beer-swilling festivals of the Fredericks of Prussia. The French manners were even less costly, as Arthur Young, in 1787, had told the French democrats of Neuilly when they grumbled as they talked of the luxuries of the neighbouring pavilion of Madame Dubarry, one of Louis's mistresses. Said these grumblers: "*Mais Frederic le Grand avoit-il une maitresse, lui faisoit-il batir des pavillons, et les meubloit-il de tables de porcelaine ?*" To which Young shrewdly replied: "No; but he had that which was fifty times worse: a king had better make love to a handsome woman than to one of his neighbour's provinces. The King of Prussia's mistress cost a hundred million sterling, and the lives of 500,000 men; and before the reign of that mistress is over, may yet cost as much more." Which

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is a more scientific historical statement than most of the sort compiled by profound historians. Far happier for France was it that Louis XIV. could dance the *courante* better than any man in Europe than he should spend his time, like the Prussian king, drilling soldiers. It was better to be a patron of dancing than a master of sergeants with canes.

Nevertheless Louis, with his centralised Court and bureaucracy, was the real danger to French freedom. By the bad blunder of insisting so much on the destruction of the local lords, instead of destroying the Central Government, France stumbled out of feudalism into a bourgeois capitalism. The democracy, with a strange blindness, spent its energy in assisting the centralisation by adding to it a stronger National Assembly. This political constitution for France was the first serious blow to the Revolution. When Napoleon had added, also, a still more rigid bureaucracy, then it was time for Frenchmen to again take up their national rôle of asserting the rights of liberty and equality.

When Napoleon and his regime had disappeared, France's great gift to Europe during the nineteenth century was a series of revolutions in 1830, 1848, 1870 ; now being completed by the present War against Prussia. The whole series is connected as a logical attempt to express the fullest freedom of the individual spirit.

The middle classes had captured the French Revolution of 1789 to a very great degree, but by no means altogether. The French people had set themselves to the work of rooting out privilege, as they saw it. With a superb energy they set themselves to the business of preaching the same gospel to every nation within reach.

It may have been a wrong-headed form of the gospel, for, after all, Napoleon was in the main the slave of the bourgeois plutocrats ; but for the moment that is not the essential point. The Napoleonic Wars in many ways may have been a piece of successful bluff on the part of a great adventurer, who persuaded a nation that it was fighting for liberty, when in fact it was only trying to build him an Empire. Though as a matter of fact, judged by the Prussian theory, Napoleon was a peaceful saint. But anyhow, the French armies advanced against the rest of Europe because they believed that the kings and princes intended to crush the new-found "liberty" of France ; and they wanted, also, to win for mankind the freedom they thought they had won for themselves. There was nothing sordid about the French in the Napoleonic Wars. They went over their frontiers in a wave of almost religious enthusiasm ; and they were ready to shed their blood for other oppressed peoples as well as for themselves. It was really a national war of a whole people that wanted to teach the world a new political and social morality. Turn to Prussia for a moment. Frederick the Great had just been sending his armies into battle surrounded by cavalry to prevent their running away !

The French Revolution did not teach the civilised world the precisely right way to the salvation of Freedom. But it did a more primary service still—it taught people to think of such a thing as desirable. It gave the world a lead. The French Revolution was the first systematic attempt on a large scale to state the case in a formal creed. Heine, after he had tried both Hohenzollern and Bourbon, and had passed his childhood in the closing

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scenes of the great upheaval, put the whole case in a few sentences : " Freedom is a new religion, the religion of our age. . . . The French are the chosen people of the new religion, the first gospels and dogmas were penned in their language. Paris is the New Jerusalem, and the Rhine is the Jordan which separates the land of Freedom from the land of the Philistines." It is not by mere chance that the Germans and the French glare at each other over that river with hatred in their hearts. The two countries have differing spirits, which can never blend.

Restlessly searching for their ideals, having found the Revolution and the Napoleonic Empire unsatisfying disappointments, the French brought back the old line of Bourbons when Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that the Allied armies of the European kings brought back the Bourbons " in their baggage waggons," as the cynical wits of Paris expressed it. But even the reaction against the Revolution was compelled to take on a certain degree of popular form. King Louis XVIII. and his chief minister, the Duc de Richelieu, and Decazes, his Chief of Police, all wanted to be moderate, to deal gently with the Republicans and their property. Richelieu had lost a great fortune by the Revolution : he showed himself a good Celt by opposing a royalist scheme to seize back again all the estates that had been taken from the *émigrés* aristocrats when they fled. But the Constitutional Chamber had a large and violent majority of country gentlemen calling for revenge—or, as they put it, justice.

The French Government is so obedient to democracy that even a moderately minded Bourbon king found

himself being coerced by a fierce Tory majority in the popular Assembly ! But as a matter of fact the Tory Church-and-Nobles party was no worse than the bourgeois party that was clamouring to take its place. Indeed the aristocrats converted the five per cent. *rentes*, which had the democratic effect of hitting the capitalists in the region of the pocket ; and such deeds as these were really the cause of the aristocrats' fall. France, always ready to make another experiment in the development of freedom, turned the Bourbon kings out of Paris by main force.

That there was a strong reactionary fight during the rule of this Bourbon kingdom of 1815-1830 cannot be denied ; but the essential truth emerges from all the details that it was a desperate attempt to crush a revived freedom movement which was every day growing in strength. That is the main fact of French history : the reactionaries have always been fighting with their back to the wall ; and after every struggle they have found themselves more hopelessly hemmed in. It was just because men like Louis XVIII. saw their remaining powers being snatched from them that, in his weaker-minded old age, he allowed himself to be coerced by the bitter opponents of the newer democrats. It was the election to the Assembly of the revolutionary Abbé Gregoire that forced Louis to dismiss his Liberal minister, Decazes.

The next king, Charles X., was still more reactionary ; mainly because the democratic peril was still more pressing. The Paris people rose in riot. Charles replied by making Polignac, the essence of Bourbonism, his chief minister, who issued ordinances taking away

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still more liberties. The reply of the French people was to drive out the king and threaten to guillotine the minister. It is only the Prussians who give way to tyranny !

There was a real republican party in the Revolution of 1830 ; but after it was all over the men left in power were the ponderous middle class, led by a banker named Laffitte and then by Casimir Pèrier. Another branch of the royal house, the representative of the Orleanists, Louis Philippe, was chosen as the head of the state, because he professed the solid suburban faith which had turned the Great Revolution into a middle-class triumph at the end of its violence. When Cavaignac, the leader of the Republicans, was thanked for giving way so quietly, he grimly replied : " It is quite a mistake to thank us ; we have agreed simply because we have not enough men to oppose you."

France had really not done much by her latest attempt at revolution in July 1830. There was a tricolour flag flying instead of the white flag of the Bourbons. Louis Philippe had in early days actually fought for the Republic ; and he now tried hard to keep up the impression that he was a true son of the Revolution. At first Paris was charmed with a king who shook hands with everybody, and wore a silk hat and a black coat, like all other well-groomed fellow-citizens ; but the rest of the country, the peasants and provincials, took very little notice of the political change. The more serious revolutionists were by no means satisfied—but the king neatly got rid of them by placing them in power. Whereupon they scared Consols down to 52 by their programme ; and all the people with banking accounts

rallied to the side of careful moderation, as the King suspected they would.

One often wonders how the French can have sufficient energy to try a new constitution after so many failures to produce a really satisfactory result. But that is why they are so useful to civilisation. They are always making experiments (at considerable inconvenience to themselves) in the art of government. Within eighteen years of the July Revolution of 1830, they were in the thick of the much more serious experiment of 1848.

The experiment was the more energetic, perhaps, because the people as a whole were fairly prosperous. The economic condition of France was encouraging; agriculture and industry were progressing; both artisans and peasant proprietors were improving their position. The bulk of France was comparatively indifferent whether the written constitutions drawn up in Paris committee-rooms said this or that about the power of the Crown. A wise people know that one man—even a king—cannot do much harm, however many theoretical powers he may have in his political contract.

But to give absolute power to a whole class of citizens is a very different matter. France had begun to realise that Louis Philippe and his chief ministers, Thiers and Guizot, were considering the convenience of nobody but the well-to-do middle classes. Now the Frenchman is a man of taste above all things. He was quite prepared to sacrifice his personal convenience and his purse, under the rule of the Emperor Napoleon, because Napoleon gave him a most gorgeous spectacle for his money. He made the kingdom of France the finest display of power in the world. But this Louis Philippe was a very drab-

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coloured monarch, with a crowd of uninspiring, though very eloquent, ministers, who based their power on an electorate which did not number more than two hundred thousand voters. These ponderous Whiggish gentlemen could think of nothing better than peace for their policy abroad ; and nothing better than stolid resistance to all change at home. To be ruled by a dramatic genius, like Napoleon, was tolerable ; to be governed by a set of dull middle-class gentlemen in black coats was quite intolerable. So the French had a good excuse for trying another experiment in political organisation.

It was the artisan, town-dwelling working class, under the leadership of Louis Blanc, which insisted on challenging this middle-class constitution. As early as 1834 the silk workers of Lyons had fought in the streets for four days against the Government, which replied by guns and repressive laws. But shut up in prison together, the revolutionaries talked over their plans all the more easily. Thanks to the severity of the suppression, the Socialist party under Blanc, and the Aristocratic-Communist party under St Simon and Fourier, grew in strength.

When Louis Philippe made himself look foolish by his feeble foreign policy in Spain, and his autocratic attempt to crush a democratic movement in Switzerland, then the discontent against him grew faster. Guizot had only been able to keep a majority in Parliament by gross bribery, which made half the Chamber into functionaries holding offices at his pleasure. When there was an agitation for a more democratic constitution, Guizot gave the pious bourgeois advice : " Enrich yourselves by your labour, and you will win the right to a vote."

But it is more in accordance with the French national spirit to advise their rulers rather than to take their advice. When the gentlemanly revolutionists began a series of "reform banquets" the idea was very quickly expanded into a mob in the street shouting: "Down with the monarchy." There was not much difficulty with that part of the programme, for Citizen Louis Philippe quickly signed his abdication and disappeared. But it was another matter to decide what should take his place. The difficulty ended after the manner of all revolutions. At first the extreme party held the power; Louis Blanc was even able to organise his national workshops, which were to be, he hoped, the foundation of the Socialist state. But within a few months the wealthy classes had persuaded the people to stand by while these extremists were put down by force of arms.

Having crushed the revolutionaries, the sober politicians turned to their usual business of drawing up a constitution—which in more than one sense is the sad end of most revolutions. However, something had been gained by this latest adventure in French freedom-hunting. The old constitution had given votes to about 200,000 Frenchmen. Under the new one, over seven millions possessed the franchise. Still further, the head of the new Republic was no longer to be chosen by a few deputies sitting in Paris. He was to be the direct choice of the seven million electors, each voting himself.

Then came this astounding result. By an overwhelming majority the nation chose the Prince Louis Napoleon, the nephew of the Emperor. The freedom-loving Frenchmen is not afraid of a great man; it is only

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the slave who dreads greatness. (As it turned out, Louis Napoleon was anything but a great man—but at the time France did not know that.) The first Napoleon had made many mistakes, but, take it all in all, the Republic would have come to a worse end without his help. Louis Napoleon was the deliberate choice of France. But for the present purpose the chief interest lies in the fact that civilisation in France had reached such a stage that a ruler was a matter of democratic voting. One in vain tries to imagine the possibility of such an event in Prussia; and one further wonders what chance a Hohenzollern would have if he put himself up for election in a real democracy. It would be the chance that a rat would have in a barn full of terriers.

The change of title from President to Emperor, which took place in 1852, is only one of those theoretical points to which nobody but the dull-witted politicians pay much attention. The change, whatever it was worth, was also made by universal suffrage. But it should be remembered that between the two decisions of the people, a reactionary Parliament had deprived two-fifths of the electors of their franchise; and it was only by a *coup d'état* that Napoleon was able to place his re-election as Emperor in the hands of the larger electorate again. Perhaps the secret of his success was that the middle classes were thoroughly scared, as in 1830, by National Bonds falling one half in value; while the peasants were in a panic lest the extreme Socialists would confiscate their land.

No one will pretend that Louis Napoleon's government was anything but autocratic. He had exiled the Republican leaders, rigidly censored the press, while

the clergy were his chief assistants in persuading the peasants to vote for the official candidates. But on the whole Napoleon was a democrat in his results if not in his methods. In 1864 he insisted on the Chamber passing a law giving the workers the right of combination ; and much attention was given to the development of public works and private industry, with the deliberate intention that they should prove beneficial to the working class.

But there is not much to be said for Napoleon's domestic policy. His brain power was not unlimited, and what he had was mainly absorbed in his exciting dream of the Napoleonic myth. He had persuaded himself that he had inherited from his famous uncle the work of reshaping Europe on the foundation of nationality and universal suffrage—not an unworthy ideal surely, and one which will be appreciated better if it be compared with the ideals which inspired his contemporaries in Prussia. Napoleon may or may not have been sincere in his respect for the rights of nations to settle their own affairs by popular votes. The brilliant part of his intellect was probably only a rather small speck in a chaos of muddled thinking. His policy appears to have been mainly the gleanings and recollections of domestic chats about their well-known uncle. On the whole, Louis Napoleon seems to have discreetly combined many honestly good intentions with his personal ambitions. His failure to fulfil them was chiefly owing to lack of intelligence.

But the personal policy of Napoleon was, after all, very largely dictated by the wishes of the French people. It is the note of the essential democracy of France.

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Prussia had gone to war with Denmark and involved itself with Austria amid the protests of its own subjects. Most of Napoleon's military manœuvres were made in order to preserve his throne by yielding to popular clamour. And in most cases it is possible to make out a fairly good case for the action having been in conformity with the principles of liberal thought. Even the Crimean War might be taken as the defence of a weak Turkey against a dictating Russia, though the argument must not be pushed too far ; for Russia, as we shall see later, has generally had the better case in Eastern diplomacy.

In the case of Poland, it was the cry of the French which compelled Napoleon to make some attempt to help the Nationalist party of that country in 1863. It was Napoleon who pleaded for the right of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallacia to form themselves into one united nation free from Turkish control—thus carrying out the process which the Tsar of Russia had begun. In the matter of Schleswig-Holstein, France once more clamoured that Napoleon should defend the principle that those two duchies had the right to protect themselves against Prussian and Austrian despotism. In the case of Italy, the same idea was expounded on a far bigger and more successful scale. It was the first Napoleon who had given the Italians one of their first lessons in throwing off the rule of Austria. Even when his Empire was crushed, the discharged officials and officers of the Franco-Italian governments remained as a centre of disaffection against the autocratic rule of the restored princes. It remains one of the greatest triumphs of the French that they were able to teach a still

older Latin civilisation some valuable lessons in freedom.

No one imagines that Napoleon marched his army into Italy, in 1859, entirely for the pleasure of helping the revolting Italian people to throw off the Austrian yoke. What he had in his mind was the foundation of an Italian confederation of constitutionally governed states, which would look to him as their protector, and would be a most helpful balance against the German Confederation on his eastern border; though he hoped that the latter also would come under his protection if he cultivated the friendship of the south German states that had served his uncle so well.

In short, Louis Napoleon was out on the same great adventure of dominating Europe that had brought the first Napoleon to disaster. But there is a long stretch of public morality between the Napoleonic ideal and the ideal of the Hohenzollerns. Napoleon I. had taught the German states the elements of political liberty; and they were actually freer under his leadership than they were before his armies passed the Rhine. It was these French ideas which had remained as an inspiration in South Germany, prodding them on to resist the Teutonic tyranny during the dark first half of the nineteenth century, when Austria and, still more, Prussia were struggling over their weak bodies.

We have seen how the German states were finally gathered together under Prussia in 1866 and 1870. It was by the power of the sword, or, at the best, at the dictation of princes. Now turn to the history of the unity of Italy of which Napoleon II. was the most active supporter. He had given Cavour, the chief Italian states-

man, a promise that if it came to a struggle between the Italian Nationalists and the Austrian power, the French army would march to Italy's assistance. The time came to fulfil that promise in 1859; and at the battles of Magenta and Solferino the Austrians were defeated, largely by the enthusiasm of the French soldiers. There followed a deal of rather shifty manœuvring by Napoleon, who certainly never had a firm touch in diplomatic affairs. But there was a greater than Louis Napoleon to expound the Latin and Celtic spirit. When the Austrians were driven out, and the resettlement of the nation had to be decided, no state in Italy was forced into the united nation without a plebiscite first recording the will of each province. When Napoleon came to claim his reward, and asked for the cession of Savoy and Nice, the matter had to be referred to the inhabitants of those districts, who were asked to decide by a popular vote whether they wished the change of kingship. One never heard of a Prussian conqueror referring such a decision to the people. No doubt Napoleon took steps to manipulate the votes so that there should be no mistake about the answer—perhaps all governments are corrupt in various degrees—but the point of interest is that such a formality had to be made as a concession to the spirit of the French and Italian nations.

The difference between the foundation of united Italy and united Germany, is the difference between the freedom of the Latin and the coercion of the Teuton despot. The former came to pass in the ballot-boxes of the people. The latter came by the victory of the Prussian armies and by the decision of conquering Teuton princes in the palace of a conquered France. The Teuton can

only think with arms in their hands. Remember also, it was Teuton despotism from which Italy was freeing herself.

It is a little strange when one realises that although Louis Napoleon had started his reign with the desire to put the boundary of France again on the Rhine, yet when the time came it was his people who pushed him on to fight Prussia, while he himself went into the task without enthusiasm. He had played several cards in order to obtain possession of some at least of the land between France and the Rhine. Bismarck had left him with the comfortable belief that as a reward for remaining quiet when Austria was being crushed, France would get some increase of territory either in Luxemburg, Belgium or in some of the other German Rhine districts. But it was never the intention of Bismarck to do aught but play with the simplicity of Napoleon as a cat plays with a mouse. All the Teutonic cat wanted was an opportunity to crush France at the most suitable moment. It was a cold-blooded plot, for Bismarck only desired to crush France incidentally, as it were ; his main reason for a war was that it seemed the only way to complete the unification of Germany under Prussia's leadership. A successful war with Austria had done half the work. A successful war against France would unite Germany altogether. Besides, the French would never consent to the unity of Germany without a struggle.

The immediate excuse for the war was trivial in itself, and deliberately dishonest on Bismarck's part. Spain, in the search for a new king, chose a member of a branch of the Hohenzollern family. Naturally, the French did not appreciate the favour of having such a breed on the

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south as well as to the east. It would have been too much like living in the middle of the tiger cage at the Zoo. The offer was three times discreetly declined ; but Bismarck deliberately persuaded a fourth proposal to be accepted. The cry of Paris was so determined that again the candidate withdrew. Then the French extremists demanded that the King of Prussia should give a solemn promise that never again should the same proposal be considered. William I. declined to give this assurance, but showed a tendency to treat the French demand with every courtesy. Bismarck practically forged the documents so that it would appear that William had treated the French ambassador with curtness, almost with insult. A nation which could produce such a statesman and honour his behaviour has no further claim to admittance into the society of honourable peoples. But Prussia was quite willing to win its way by the methods of a card-sharper. Even at this time the gentlemanly Bismarck was well gripped by the Prussian machine. The Paris street crowds shouted : " À Berlin " ; the vast majority of the French people probably knew nothing about the matter. Not the best of democracies has yet known much of the ways of its governors. The war began.

Louis Napoleon had forgotten one very important thing when he tried to play at being his uncle. He forgot the army. The Franco-German War of 1870-1871 was not a triumph of Teutonic bravery ; it was a debacle of French organisation. The French army had the chaotic possibilities of a stock-taking sale in its last week. The details of the campaign do not concern us here. Suffice it to say that before the French could attempt to deal with the Germans they had to tear down the sham

trappings of their own monarchy. The people of Paris rose and declared the government of Louis Napoleon at an end. Never did they have a better excuse for a revolution than when they discovered how their rulers had played fast and loose with the national safety. Bazaine, one of their chief soldiers, turned out to be little else than a vulgar adventurer, who probably lost all interest in saving France when it no longer suited his own convenience and the interests of the Emperor who had hired him.

But the utter collapse of Napoleon's government was a sign of much more than the failure of a few men to do their work. It was the first sharp lesson to France that if it insisted on taking away the power of autocrats, it must also take the next step, and organise a democratic system which would take the place of the older system. The Franco-German War came at the psychological moment when France was between two stools. Louis Napoleon was an autocrat who had been elected by universal suffrage. He had the responsibilities of both autocracy and democracy, and the power of neither. He was a half-breed, of mongrel race; albeit a civilised gentleman, compared with the men who believed in blood and iron and card-sharpers' tricks. But for that very reason he and France were somewhat helpless when confronted by a gang of people who relied on the simple but effective method of brute force.

The Franco-German War was over in six months. It is necessary to remember, however, that, had it not been for the incompetency or treachery of Bazaine or both, and other pieces of national bad luck, the Germans, with all their boasted army, might easily have been driven

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out again by a country which had the elements of independence and centuries of civilisation in its bones—elements which in the long run will annihilate all the military organisation in creation. For much the same reason that sooner or later the philosopher gets the better of the savage. It appears the destiny of the world that force must eventually collapse before reason. Prussia is only a survival.

Bismarck got his united Prussia, which was his chief reason for the war; and it is interesting to see how moderate after all he was in his advice to his conquering country. Alsace and Lorraine were demanded from the French; but it was not without a struggle that he allowed his military colleagues to add Metz. Bismarck said every inch of conquered territory would add to the sum and length of French hatred and desire for revenge. The soldiers said Metz was worth one hundred thousand men as a strategical outpost. But Metz had a value to Germany far greater than as a fortress. It was a district rich in iron ore. It was therefore symbolical of Germany's new rôle as an alliance between commercial and military power. The Prussian aristocrats had brought back wealth for the traders. As we have seen, it was to become the new note of the national existence.

There was one almost laughable sequel to this Franco-German War. With the childlike simplicity of mind one would expect from a nation of professional soldiers, the Prussians imagined that they could crush France by force of arms. Instead, they revived every element of strength in the temporarily conquered country. The war had the effect on the French of an injection of strychnine. France

with incredible swiftness rose to its feet both materially and spiritually. The huge war indemnity was paid with a miraculous promptness which astonished the comparatively poor Germans, as a country bumpkin stands open-mouthed when his aunt's legacy is shovelled out to him in gold over a bank counter. That the Celtic spirit immediately sprang to its highest point probably escaped the Teutonic intelligence, which is not given to the appreciation of psychology. But they must have sometimes contemplated with nervous misgiving the more obvious material fact that since the defeat of 1870-1871 the French have begun their greatest colonial expansion. By territorial absorption in Africa and in Asia the French have increased their population tenfold since 1871. Tunis, Morocco, Madagascar have been peacefully possessed under the very nose of a Prussian army that had shouted to itself that it was supreme. To a civilised people it might have confirmed the lesson that brute force is the most ineffective thing in this world.

The outcome of this war of 1870-1871 was the quicker widening of the material and mental gap between the two nations. Germany was to become still more controlled by the military bureaucrats and the industrial capitalism. So that France stood out still more clearly as a Great Power of Western Europe which had not allowed itself to be swept away altogether in the raging flood of commercialism, machinery and militarism.

The peasant proprietor remains the basis of France ; while Germany has progressed rapidly in the direction of becoming the most successful commercial traveller and clerk the world has yet produced. Statistics are somewhat unconvincing ; but there is a more pictorial fact

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that expresses the same truth. The Rhine was the highway of feudal castle ; it has become the transit department of factories and iron works. The Loire, the greatest river of France, is still the gentle scene of princely chateaux—in the possession of the French Republic ! In other words, France has rejected much of her old social forms, without accepting whole-heartedly the modern industrialism which has elsewhere generally taken the mediæval place. France has not yet made up its mind that Commercialism is the only alternative to Feudalism. The statement of that problem is, perhaps, France's greatest contribution to human knowledge. It certainly expresses the wide distance of thought which separates this nation from the general flood of contemporary life.

It is probably the subconscious expression of this dread of Industrialism that had made the French so wavering in their political affairs. Even when so badly used by their Emperor, it took several years before they finally determined to adopt a republican form for their government. It was not until 1875 that the Republic was formally constituted ; and he would be a bold man who would even now stake his fortune on the assumption that there will never again be a king in France. The chances are that it will only be under the most acute provocation that the democratic Latin-Celts of France will again deliberately put themselves under the control of even a constitutional monarch. A purely absolute king is now an impossibility as a ruler of the French. There is only one thing that will again drive them to restore a royal house ; and that is a still more autocratic Republic. The apparition of the "boss" rule of the

United States of America has led many wise people to wonder whether royalty and feudalism may not still be a useful barrier against the despotism of plutocrats.

In the frantic chaos of the closing days of the German invasion of 1870-1871 the French had made a very temporary but very interesting addition to their political experiments. It is quite a blunder to imagine that the Paris Commune of 1871 was a thoughtless uprising of a starving mob, out to destroy society. As happens in the case of every time of social confusion, the disorderly elements may have tried to find their chance in the turmoil. But the heart of the Communists' political position was an assertion that the chief fault of the French government was its over-centralisation. For the first time in history Paris did not wish it to be assumed that it had any right to speak for France. The theory of the Communists was that each district and each large city should in the main govern itself, with the central administration reduced to a minimum. They, probably correctly, saw that a highly centralised bureaucracy sooner or later was able to establish itself as a despotism ; and an inefficient despotism at that. Had not the centralising bureaucracy of Napoleon just brought France to disaster ?

It is an interesting fact that it was when the Prussians were in Paris that the French people should have made their most extreme protest against the Prussian theory of government. Prussia is the last word in centralised bureaucratic despotism. The Paris Commune was the first vigorous protest against everything in the art of government which Prussia accepted.

Much of the history of France since the Franco-German

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War has been closely interwoven with the matter of Clericalism. It was the Church that had led the revival of the Bourbons in the days succeeding Waterloo ; and, be it carefully remembered, it was the middle class of traders and manufacturers that had been the heart of the opposition to that Bourbonism. Louis Philippe and Louis Napoleon had found the Church one of their most prickly problems. The latter had made himself the police force that guarded the Pope in rebellious Rome ; and it was not until Napoleon's government came down with a crash in 1870 that the Italians were able to complete their unity by entering Rome in triumph, making it the capital of their united nation.

But it was with the establishment of the third Republic that the Clerical problem became really urgent. Gambetta, the soul of the early Republic, told his fellow-citizens that " Clericalism is the enemy " ; and in 1902 M. Combes could with a certain truth make the avowal : " Clericalism is, in fact, to be found at the bottom of every agitation and every intrigue from which Republican France has suffered during the last thirty-five years." He had apparently forgotten that it was the Clerical party which was the basis of the Nationalist agitation which had rushed France into the war with Germany ; so it was clear they could smash monarchies as well as republics.

Frenchmen may be perfectly correct when they diagnose Clericalism as a persistent intriguer against the ideal of the present political regime ; but it is a hasty begging of the question to assume that therefore the Church of Rome is always opposed to the best fundamental ideals of French civilisation. The subject needs a closer

analysis than this crude statement that the Church is always on the side of monarchical autocracy and the suppression of modern thought. It begs the question whether "modern" thought and a republican government are always right.

Admitting that the Ultramontane pretensions, the papal assertion of Infallibility in 1870, and such things, are beyond the acceptance of a free-minded humanity, and without committing oneself to a single dogma of the Church, there is yet a vital factor beneath this Clericalism which is an essential part of the problem of French civilisation. Quite apart from its attitude towards the Republic and modern science, there is a deeper note in the Catholic view of life. Its creed may or may not be believed in the details; the deeper note is that protest against the materialism of the modern world as well as against its "advanced" thinking.

It is as a part of the protest against that materialism which so often expresses itself by Industrialism and High Finance, that Roman Catholicism is an interesting part of modern French history. Catholicism and old-world monarchy are alike in that they express a certain reaction—however vague and indefinite—against the modern commercialised state. Royalism and Catholicism are important factors in French life, just because they are both out of place in a world of modern Capitalism. The elements of the older and new worlds, of course, often interlace. There are Monarchists and Clericalists who are agents of high finance; there are circles of capitalists who hope to benefit by the seating of a Catholic-Absolute king on the throne; but these are the mere chances of the game. In the main, the psychology of the feudalist

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and true cleric is in conflict with the mind of the commercialist. A bishop of Rome, with his chair in a factory town, is a man out of place.

Immediately after the Franco-German War the extreme French Ultramontane bishops forced the pace of their propaganda, and seriously endangered the national safety by angering both Germany and the temporal Italian power. There was therefore a strong reaction against the Clerics, and at the general election of 1879 the Ultramontanes were crushed by a Republican attack led by Jules Ferry.

Then came a sudden change. The new Pope, Leo XIII., by a series of Bulls forbade French Catholics to conspire against the established civil power. For example, they were ordered to withhold their support from the adventurer General Boulanger, who was on the point of upsetting the Republic in 1889. The Bull *Inter innumeras*, 1892, went as far as to instruct Catholics to take sides with the democracy, "for the civil power, upon every theory, comes from God." The Republican Government replied with a policy of graceful toleration.

But the Clerics broke the peace by a violent crusade, in the journals the *Libre Parole* and the *Croix*, against Protestants and Jews, which gradually took a distinctly anti-democratic form, and gathered round the case of Dreyfus, a Jewish officer, who was accused of selling military secrets to Germany. Sentenced by a secret court martial in 1894, it was not until 1906 that he was declared entirely innocent; and this only after a series of extraordinarily persistent attempts by his accusers to conceal the truth. It is only fair to add that there are serious critics who still believe that he was guilty.

However, the question had by this time got beyond the guilt of an individual. Everyone regarded it as an attempt of the Catholics and the army on one side to pose as the defenders of the nation against Republican politicians on the other. The innocence of Dreyfus became an almost essential part of the Republican faith. His acquittal was regarded as the triumph of a Liberal republic over a reactionary Clerical-military-royalism. Since the Church, so it was said, had the first part in the accusation, when the acquittal came it was on the Church that revenge was taken. A movement of Anti-Clericalism, mainly led by the Socialist politicians, Jaurès and Briand, ended during the year 1906-1907, in the complete withdrawal of any recognition of the Church of Rome by the Republic of France.

It is easier after the lapse of a few years, and especially after the outbreak of the Great War of 1914, to draw sounder conclusions from the Dreyfus episode than the red-hot partisans of that struggle could admit. Now that France has been through the fire and has found itself a united nation against the attack of the Prussian autocracy of Potsdam and Krupp, it is clear that the corruption, if there was any, whether on the Nationalist side or on the Republican side, could only have been a matter of a small political class. The vast bulk of the nation is sound at the core. After the outbreak of the War of 1914 it is clear that there is no large class that is false to the national safety.

On the other hand the Republican politicians have by no means come through the ordeal of governing without a strain. There has been much rumour, or worse than rumour, of financial and place-hunting cor-

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ruption in the high seats of French Republican governments. It is, after almost fifty years of the Third Republic, impossible to plead that the new system has shown itself competent to cure half the wrongs for which it blamed the monarchy. The Republicans themselves have proved a fair amount of the Clerical-Royalist case. Perhaps it is no longer fair to assume that the Clerical-Royalists even want to upset the Republic in any vicious sense. Like the best of the Republicans, they are merely seeking the purest government. In any case, the question will be decided by the French people, not by a few politicians of any sect.

A few moments' glance at the career of Comte Albert de Mun, who died soon after the declaration of the War of 1914, will show that the claim of being the champions of democracy can no longer be left to the Republicans alone. He was a Legitimate Royalist and a Catholic of the most rigid type; and he was the recognised leader of that political party in France. He was the most charming expression of the cultured aristocrat. Yet we find him the constant defender of the working class against the plutocracy of the Republicans. His charge against the Great Revolution was that it crushed out so much of the mediæval collectivism, and put in its place a selfish individualism which considered no one's rights but the rights of the strongest. M. de Mun reminded his Republican opponents that it was the Revolutionary Assembly of 1791 that broke up the trade guilds by forbidding members of the same occupation to form unions or hold meetings. He is but an example of many who hold the Royalist and Catholic faith. They

are revolted by the crude commercial, plutocratic individualism that has taken the place of the more democratic communism of the mediæval period. The Comte de Mun was a Socialist. Many of the Republicans are plutocrats and capitalists. And he immediately obeyed the Pope's Encyclical of 1892 commanding the Catholics to recognise the Republic as the established government of France. No one can pretend that all the Catholics and Royalists are as sound democrats as M. de Mun ; but it cannot be denied that he did express in very convincing form the fact that the clash between the modern Republican and the mediæval Royalist-Catholic is by no means the difference between democratic government and autocracy.

But there is a later movement still in French public life than this struggle between Clerical-Royalists and Secular Republicans. There is growing up a marked suspicion, even contempt, for all sorts of government whatsoever. This has gone far further than a Syndicalist movement in the Labour circles ; though that is one aspect of the same thing. There was a time when it was held an honour to be an official in the service of the State. To-day there are careful people who hesitate lest they sear their reputations by holding office. As the Abbé Ernest Dimnet has expressed it : "The official is despised on account of his lack of independence, his indifference to his work, the uneventfulness of his life, and the habit he has of thinking himself the master instead of the servant of the public." Of the politician the same writer says : "The politician is regarded as not only intellectually but morally inferior, a man who

follows a profitable though disreputable trade, and covers his dealings with patriotic pretences."

Is it possible that the French spirit, in its restless search for the freest form of government, has begun to wonder whether it is well to have any government at all ? It is, anyhow, a fact that the French treated their last general election of 1913 as a child treats a toy that has lost its first fascinations. The cynical accepted and offered the little bribes that turn votes, with a shrug of the shoulders that protested that there is no immorality in doing that which has no real effect when done. The French have begun to treat their politicians as the players of a game in which the nation has no direct interest. This may be a piece of bad judgment on the part of the nation. The politicians are not all selfishly corrupt ; and if they were it would be necessary to control them ; just as it is necessary to treat a burglar in the house with something more than cynical indifference.

Everybody now knows that the politicians and the bureaucracy of France had not guarded their country in the best possible manner against the attack from Germany which they knew was inevitable. France was not perfectly ready when war was declared ; and the political bureaucracy were largely to blame. To a large degree their faults were their virtues ; for the Frenchman is too civilised a being to devote his whole life to the preparation for a brutal attack on his neighbours. The very recent agitation against the new Three-Years' Service was a genuine expression of the French civilisation which found war an indecent barbarism. It is only in Prussianised Germany that savagery is still held to be a respectable profession.

There will come a reaction from this negative contempt for the politicians. Although France has begun to see more sense in the decentralising theory of the Communists than when they shot those rebels down in 1871, yet the theory must not be carried too far. France wants the right central government, not the abolition or contemptuous disregard of it. But so far as the suspicion of that central government has already gone, it is the last expression of that abysmal gulf between the Prussian and the Celtic-Latin mind. The slave-souled Teuton worships his rulers as a dog follows his master ; the Celt is eternally criticising his government, and always demands a better one.

V : RUSSIA

IN passing from France to Russia one goes from the extreme west of Europe to its extreme east. It has been hastily assumed that the geographical leap is necessarily a social and political leap also. The facts do not warrant such a conclusion. To go from Paris to Berlin is to pass from one type of civilisation to another. To continue our journey into Slav Russia is, in more senses than one, to end much nearer where we began.

We have already noted that the most recent ethnological science tends to the belief that the Alpine Race was a main stock that spread itself across the central backbone of Europe, from the Carpathians to the French Atlantic coast. Into the centre of this far-distributed race the Northern Teutons entered as a dividing wedge. There is considerable ground for the belief that the early French stock, represented by the Breton, is a first cousin of the purer Russian Slav, who has been cut off from family intercourse by the intruding Germanic Teutons.

But whether this racial relationship be admitted or not, we shall find in the history of Russian development a mass of evidence that brings us to the same practical conclusion. Even if the racial relationship between the French and Russians be denied, it yet remains clear that the psychology and social system of the Slav is closely sympathetic with that of the French nation, and equally opposed to the tone of the Prussian military bureaucracy.

In dealing with the history of Russia we are handling the problem of Race in a far more complete sense than we have found even in the analysis of France or Germany. The Slav race, for various reasons, is probably a purer race than the inhabitants of either of the other two countries mentioned. The Slavs have always had a race-clinging nature, which has led them to maintain a coherency even when they have migrated or been surrounded by alien people. Placed on the eastern border of Europe, on the road of almost every racial advance from Asia, one might have imagined that the Slav would soon have lost his individuality. It is not so. That is why he still stands as the representative of an older Europe which has elsewhere generally given itself to a rather reckless cosmopolitanism.

Theoretical etymology has its dangers. But it appears that the term Slav is based on a native word, *slowo*, meaning a word. The Slavs, it has been suggested, thought of themselves as the people who spoke intelligently, as against the neighbouring Germans, the Niemets, the dumb men. It must annoy the Germans to know that the Teutonic claim of culture was contested even from the beginning.

There is no historical evidence of fundamental migrations of the Slav peoples in national masses. We first hear of them in the neighbourhood of the Carpathian Mountains; and when the Russian army advanced against the Austrians, they were approaching one of the earliest historical homes of their Slavic ancestors.

The ancient writers speak of them as a peaceful and hospitable people, who were loath to fight their neighbours unless driven by the necessity of self-defence.

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They were essentially agriculturists, without warlike and quarrelsome instincts. We first hear of movement among them when they passed peacefully into the northern German lands, round the Elbe and along the Baltic coasts: and it is typical of the race that they occupied this new territory because it was vacant of owners; for the wilder Teutons had travelled away south to raid the Roman Empire. This peaceful emigration took place during the fifth and sixth centuries. It was these Slav emigrants that the Teutons reinvaded, as we have seen, on the rebound of the Germans from Rome.

But it is not with this north-western branch of the family that we have now to deal. The stay-at-home Slavs east of the Carpathians, somewhere about the middle of the ninth century, found their peace disturbed by a gang of dominating people who came (said the early Slavic legends) from the land of Rus. They were, we now know, a section of the Teutonic Norsemen who were at this time raiding as much of Europe as was within reach of their adventurous warships. This Russian invasion was, in fact, another chapter of that invasion which brought the Northmen and Normans to our own shores about the same time, or a little later. On this eastern side a more or less mythical Scandinavian chief, named Ruric, founded a Teutonic dynasty, which ruled over this Slav race until the year 1613; when the Romanoffs, a Prussian family, took its place, and still possesses the crown of Russia.

From the days of Ruric and his freebooter companions the dominant note of Russian government has continued until this present War of 1914. That note is the suprem-

acy of an autocratic Teutonic ruling race over a nation of more peaceful Slavs. That is what so many people forget in considering Russian history. They measure up the whole political and social structure of Russia as the expression of the Slav spirit. Whereas, on closer inspection, it will appear that the governing class is not Slavic at all, but Teutonic in its inspiration, and very often Teutonic in its blood. But this will be more easily understood when the main facts of Russian history have been sketched.

The earliest seat of this Scandinavian Norsemen's state (after the first capital at Novgorod, which Ruric made his headquarters) was Kiev, on the Dnieper river, in the south-west corner of Russia, just east of the Carpathian Mountains, which we have accepted as the earliest historical home of the Slavs. Round this city as a centre the family of Ruric and their friends built up a number of little states, which acknowledged the head of the family at Kiev as the head-king of Russia. By the beginning of the twelfth century there were over sixty of these little principalities. By this time the Norse chiefs had extended their journeys to Constantinople, then the seat of the Byzantine half of the great Roman Empire, and, in the eyes of orthodox people, the most civilised centre of Europe.

Being of Teutonic blood, of course this extension to the Byzantine territory had been with intent to kill and capture. But the usual result followed; the warriors were more permanently impressed by the culture than their enemies were by the arms. The Norsemen learned the elements of civilisation from the people of Constantinople; they adopted the Eastern

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form of Christianity, and introduced that religion to their Slav subjects.

Thus was begun that close relationship between the government at Constantinople and Russia which so largely dominates the policy of the Russians to-day. Who shall rule at Constantinople? had already been put in questioning form. It was the opening of the so far insoluble problem of the Near East. When the Russians advance towards Constantinople to-day they are only doing what they did at the beginning of their history.

This early Ruric monarchy of Kiev owed a good deal of its success to a basic foundation of a merchant class of traders who had already begun that linking of the European and Asiatic commerce which is still materialised in Western minds by the fair of Nizhni-Novgorod. Besides its relations with Constantinople, Russia in its primitive days began an intercourse with Western Europe. As early as the beginning of the eleventh century, for example, we find the daughter of the reigning prince of Russia marrying Henry I., King of France. But this Western movement was cut short by the introduction into Russia of a very insistent new problem from the East. It was the coming of the Tartars. But before they arrived in full force the Kiev dynasty had been supplanted by a branch of the Ruric house which had its centre more to the north. By the beginning of the thirteenth century we find the ruler of Vladimir taking the place of the King of Kiev as the acknowledged Grand Prince of the Russian states.

The monarchy of the north had established itself none too soon; for by the middle of the same century the

Tartars had advanced into the country and weakened the whole structure of the Norse power in Russia ; to a large extent replacing that rule by their own. For one hundred and fifty years the Mongolian Khans were the lords of the Russian principalities, ruling from their capital, Serai, which they had built on the lower part of the Volga ; and for still another hundred and fifty years they were an important factor in Russian history.

This Tartar invasion has attracted a good deal more attention in popular histories than it deserves. Invasion is not really the right term to express the affair. The Russians were certainly conquered ; in the sense that their military power was broken for a time. But whereas the first great defeat of the Russians by the Tartars took place in 1224, by the year 1260 the Tartar government had been practically withdrawn from the Russian states ; and the connection between the two powers soon became mainly the levying and paying of a financial tribute, the collection of which was made by the Russian princes who alone dealt with the conquerors at Serai. The Mongols did not rule Russia in the sense that we take an active part in the government of India. They merely took a commission on the wealth of Russia, just as a modern man of finance takes a share of industries without much part in their management. The Mongols turned the Russian princes into tax-collectors, who handed the money over to the Tartar chiefs, until gradually the latter became too weak to enforce the tribute ; while the princes, on their side, gradually became too strong to pay.

These Tartars have got into the history book as an altogether objectionable set of men. But, as a matter of

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fact, they could give Europe many lessons in good manners. They certainly were rough and unscrupulous enough when it came to fighting. But at heart they were a pastoral people, who rather unexpectedly developed a passion for conquest, under the inspiration of Jenghiz Khan. But when they had had their fling, they behaved most reasonably for their age. They had, for example, none of that unchristian desire to martyr their religious opponents which has so often been displayed in clerical circles in the West. They had not the slightest objection to a Christian bishop setting up his church in their capital. They only became unpleasant if there was any delay in paying the right sum of tribute.

It was in arranging this delicate business of the tribute that the Ruric princes of Moscow first showed their superiority to their fellow-rulers. It was a dangerous affair, carrying on negotiations with the khans of Mongolia, and owing to hasty and careless justice in the Tartar courts it was not unknown for a Russian prince to get himself executed whilst engaged in this national work. The monarchs of Moscow developed the right touch for their Tartar overlords, and were made tax-collectors in chief for all Russia. Continuing their success, they next found themselves able to keep a good deal of the tribute for themselves ; and then persuaded the Russian princes to combine together and break the Mongolian power in Russia altogether. After Dimitri Douskoi of Moscow, as leader of the Russians, had defeated the Tartars in the great battle of Kulikovo, in 1380, Russia was once more free of the overwhelming Mongolian rule ; although it was not until the reign of Ivan the Terrible that Russia

was entirely free of the Tartars as a force on the outskirts of the kingdom.

It was the princes of Moscow who really laid the foundations of modern Russia. Away in the north they had been able to escape in some degree from the Tartar dominance ; and had been able, as we have seen, to meet the khans on equal terms. These Slavs of the north had blended in part with the Finnish peoples ; and the result was a Slav race which differed from the Little Russians of Kiev ; and eventually its people were known as the Great Russians. These Moscow princes set to work to override all the other Russian states, and by the beginning of the sixteenth century this conquest was practically completed.

It was Ivan the Great, 1462-1505, Basil III., 1505-1533, and Ivan the Terrible, 1533-1584, who were the first to develop in full blossom the qualities that are usually associated with Russian autocracy. The symbol of this new claim was when, in 1547, Ivan the Terrible commanded that he should be crowned as Tsar of all Russia. Now Tsar is the Russian form of Cæsar ; and when Ivan used that word he intended it to bear a far wider meaning than supremacy over the other Russian princes. His grandfather, Ivan III., had already called Moscow "the new city of Constantine," when the older Constantinople had fallen into the hands of the Turks in 1453. In other words, the princes of Moscow, chief lords of Russia, had begun to regard themselves as the successors to the fallen Roman emperors of Byzantium. They were the more inclined to make this claim because at the Council of Florence the ecclesiastical powers of Constantinople had seriously compromised their faith by

concession to the Western Roman Church. It was not at all an unreasonable claim. For they were the most powerful rulers of the peoples who had received their civilisation from the Eastern Church and its surrounding culture.

It was during the reigns of these three kings that the chief rulers of Russia drew the hard line between themselves and all their subjects, whether nobles or peasants. Until this time the grand princes had not been more than the greatest of the lords. Now the Ivans, partly in imitation of the Tartar and Byzantine autocracy, began to claim a supremacy and the right to a state ceremony which raised them above all popular or aristocratic advice or participation in the powers of government. Ivan III. had a noble beheaded for saying that a king ought to call councils of the nobility to give advice to the Crown. He put on the airs of the Byzantine emperors. He was no longer ready to listen to the Duma, or council of nobles, which had controlled the earlier princes. It is scarcely fair, however, to judge Ivan the Terrible's autocracy on any other supposition than that he was a madman. For he employed a body of thousands of officials and armed men to slaughter his subjects, apparently without rhyme or reason, after he had already crushed the really insurgent aristocracy. His grandfather had already annihilated the republican constitution of the merchants' city of Novgorod ; while Ivan the Terrible in six weeks massacred anything up to sixty thousand of its inhabitants. He then had lists drawn up of the victims, for whom he desired prayers to be offered ! He was probably mad, as we have said—but all autocrats have a touch of insanity. But whether mad or sane, the autocratic tyranny of the Ivans henceforward remains

as a well-defined and permanent factor in Russian government. It is in Ivan the Terrible's special officials and armed retainers, called the Oprichniki, that we may find the origin of the "Black Hundred" of the present day—the difference being that whereas the Oprichniki served the king, now it seems more probable that they engage in the business of defending the private interests of their own bureaucratic class. But of this later.

This tendency towards autocracy was against the more fundamental instincts of the Slav people. All through their history the basis to which they have clung has been that village commune which still resists (somewhat silently, perhaps) the centralised autocratic bureaucracy. Even the rule of the earlier Ruric princes had rested on the basis of a more or less popular election, until the Tartar khans had taken the overlordship into their own hands. It was in Moscow that first the overtone of autocracy became the dominant note. Hitherto it is scarcely too much to say that, with a little luck, the invading Scandinavian aristocrats might have been subdued by the more peaceful democracy, such as that which raised its head so early in the republics of Novgorod and Pskov, to give two prominent examples. It was probably the urgent need for military strength to resist the Tartars that gave the Scandinavian princes, and especially those of Moscow, the chance to jump into the saddle of autocratic power, a position which, of course, naturally suited their temperament, being Teutons. This supposition is not a baseless theory, for the same conquest of Scandinavian Normans by a subjugated people occurred in England, where there was no need for military strength.

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Ivan the Great was the Russian who first brought his kingdom into definite relations with the west of Europe ; Peter the Great only carried out in fuller detail what his predecessor had begun. Ivan bought Western artillery, and Italian architects and engineers. A characteristic touch of the East reappeared when he chopped off the head of a foreign physician because he failed in a cure of Ivan's son. That has been the trouble in Russia ; autocracy arrived before the attainment of the most elementary household manners.

Against the power of the Church the tsars of this period also advanced. Hitherto its direct allegiance to the Patriarchs of Constantinople had given the Russian Church strength against the internal power of the Russian princes. But when the authority of these Patriarchs relaxed after the Council of Florence and the rise of the new theory of Moscow's dominant position as the seat of the Greek Church, the Russian ecclesiastics came much more under the control of the tsars. The Tartar khans had left the possessions and authority of the Russian Church almost untouched. The Moscow tsars proceeded to submerge it in their general autocracy. The process was more formally asserted by the appointment in 1589 of an independent Patriarch of Moscow, during the administration of Boris Godunoff. But if the new Patriarch was independent of the Patriarch of Constantinople, he was the more dependent on the Tsar of Moscow, whose official servant he henceforth became ; and the Church also fell into the general scheme of Muscovite autocracy.

This Boris Godunoff, who will appear almost as a personal friend to those who have attended the Russian

operas of the last two seasons at Drury Lane, was a noble of the new Oprichniki class of boyars—that is, one of the new official nobility which had grown up round the Muscovite tsars. It was he who formally bound the peasants to the soil of their proprietors' farms ; and he may thus be said to have completed the transition of the older system of a free peasantry into a system of serfdom. It was another sign of the establishment of the autocracy, for one of Boris Godunoff's chief reasons was that the State taxes might more easily be collected.

On the death of Boris Godunoff in 1605 the older nobility made an effort to throw off the new Court bureaucracy ; and for a time they won, under the leadership of Vasili, who was elected Tsar in 1606. But the powerful new nobles managed to get the poor of the towns to fight on their side ; and, led by a butcher of Moscow and a prince, the people of that city overthrew Vasili in 1610, and Michael Romanoff was elected Tsar by an assembly which professed to be representative of the nation. It was a somewhat mixed triumph of the new official nobles and the town populace over the old nobles and the serfs. So that it is not unfair to describe the election of the Romanoff dynasty, which holds the throne to this day, as the triumph of the Bureaucracy over the Aristocracy. But it is equally interesting to remember that the Romanoffs also owe their election to the throne of Russia to a movement which had behind it considerable popular support.

It is noteworthy that these Romanoffs have been traced back to a Prussian, Kobyla, who came to Moscow about 1340 and became the founder of a family of the new official nobility, which married into the family of Ruric ; and

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Michael's grandmother was of the older royal house of Russia. This Prussian descent is a startling support of our general suspicion that autocracy can generally be traced to Teutonic blood. We shall see how this element of Teutonic blood was increased by marriage later.

The reign of Peter the Great, 1689-1725, is usually considered the introduction of Russia into Western politics, or, looking at it from the other side, the beginning of Western manners in Russia. But he did no more than bring to a head a process that had already begun, chiefly in the time of Ivan the Great. His mother had been brought up in the house of Matvieeff, one of the new nobles' class, who had married a Scottish wife. Peter's sister and her female relations were the first members of the royal house to appear at the head of a national assembly; hitherto women of that class had remained in seclusion, so far as public affairs went. So Peter's early days were passed in a distinctly unorthodox atmosphere; and, besides, he undoubtedly was a genius, even if it were of the sort that one might expect with insanity in the family—his half-brother Ivan was practically an imbecile.

Peter's boyhood and youth until seventeen were of an unusual kind for a future king. The street corners of Moscow, and the harum-scarum fellowship of their most casual inhabitants, were more to his taste than Court life. He came out of this company with the original passion of building himself a navy; for with the revellers of the streets he had met the craftsman and the engineer, and had developed a practical taste for tools. So he gathered together twenty-six thousand workmen, amongst whom he lived in his little hut until almost by sheer force he had

compelled them to build him a fleet. And it was not the toy of a schoolboy's imagination—it was a success in action ; for the first time in their history the Russians were able to defeat the Turks with it.

But Peter had come to the conclusion that the building of navies and such-like things could only be learned properly in the West. So off he went to Europe on his famous tour ; which taught him, in the Deptford ship-yards, how to build ships ; and in return taught the English housewife how quickly a Russian king could turn a drawing-room into a pigsty ! He returned home with a perfect passion for Western ideas. The West had learned its lessons, such as they were, by centuries of effort. This Russian Tsar thought he could ram them down his countrymen's throats after the manner in which he could load a gun. His conception of social reform was pushing something home with a ramrod. As we have seen, he was of a Prussian family.

On the very night of his return home he realised that there would be a bitter dislike for all these Western fads which he wanted to introduce in his country. A large section of the army was already in revolt, and it had behind it the people, who preferred Old Russia to the new West. Peter got rid of the rebel soldiers by devoting the next six weeks to cutting off their heads, often with his own hand ; while between the executions he gave enormous banquets. These details are not out of place in such a slight sketch, for they are typical of the reckless stupidity of a mind that had no more knowledge of real reform than his bed-post. But Peter charged headlong forward like a mad bull ; he said : “ What if the fruit of my labour be delayed, like the fruit of the date-palm,

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the sower whereof sees it not." It was the cry of a fanatic.

Having built himself a Western navy, he now proceeded to build a Western constitution and administration. He abolished the old class of boyar nobles, and decreed that henceforth service to the state was to be the standard of nobility, arranged in degrees corresponding with the grades of the army. But this was only the formal acknowledgment of a process already begun, as we have seen. He established ministers of the army, the navy, of mining and of coining. He set up town councils and burgomasters; and when they did not work he appointed Government inspectors to watch them. He divided Russia into provinces, and these again into districts, after the manner of France. He rearranged the alphabet. He issued orders as to the manner of dressing. He told the nobles how they were to spend their evenings; and there was a special law concerning the refreshments that were to be served to the guests. He insisted on smoking, mainly, apparently, because it was forbidden by the Russian Church. It reminds one of a general who had determined to take the opposing trenches at all cost.

When all this elaborate machinery of Western life broke down in corruption, in the hands of officials who were totally unable to accommodate it to the existing customs, Peter only went on piling more officials on the top, to set right the ones who had gone wrong beneath. When he could do no more, Peter resorted to his habit of cutting off heads. His son, a nice, studious youth, refused to fit into this orgy of "reform," which was not altogether unreasonable when we consider that it did not

show any signs of reforming anything. However, Peter informed his son that he would "cut you off as though you were a gangrenous swelling." Eventually the poor creature was tortured and executed, while his civilising parent was officially proclaimed "Father of the Fatherland." His astonished people murmured to themselves: "What manner of Tsar is this, who takes us all for soldiers, and gives us no rest, and makes our wives and children widows and orphans? If he lives much longer he will ruin the whole land." Their final amazed summary of this apparition on the throne is interesting: "He is the child of a wandering German mother." It was the only theory that seemed capable of explaining the appalling facts.

When Peter found that all Moscow was obviously embarrassed by his new "civilisation," he conceived the masterly idea of building himself a brand-new capital in which to house his brand-new society. So he built Petersburg on the Baltic coast which he had won from the King of Sweden. It was the summing up of his whole policy. Note the German form of the name, which with equal significance has now been changed to the Slavic form, Petrograd. He meant his new capital to be the symbol of his new state, which was the triumph of the German ideals. The natural evolution of Russia was commanded to stop. A new state was ordered to start afresh, which was to take its tone from the new capital with the German name.

There is a popular belief that Peter the Great made the first great step forward in Russian civilisation. It would be nearer the truth to say that he almost ruined Russia. He was the first to introduce systematically

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a centralised bureaucracy which has gone near to annihilating the Slav civilisation. He hastily assumed that the German system was right. It was a piece of childish bad judgment. As we have seen, Ivan the Great must be held partly responsible. But Ivan and his grandson, the Terrible, were, comparatively speaking, harmless barbarians. Peter the Great set himself to the task of smashing Slav customs with the systematic skill of a professional house-breaker. It is the difference between the hasty act of a hungry tramp and the scientific organisation of a London gang of burglars.

The decision of the historian as to whether Peter was right or wrong is really the decision whether Teutonic bureaucracy or Slav communism is the better way for mankind to travel. Looking back over the history of Russia since Peter went mad with the mania for Westernising, it is still less easy for us to join in his eulogies. But then he did not live, as we have lived, to see the result. Bureaucracy has not saved Russia. It has, on the contrary, been the worst obstacle in the way of its national development.

But Russia did not give way to Peter. He converted little else than his imported servants, "the stable boys, flunkeys, pie vendors and the dregs of the German settlement," as they have been described. After Peter's death the dispossessed old Russian aristocracy attempted to overturn their rivals by suggesting that the absolute monarchy should be replaced by a limited constitution. But this was too obviously an attempt to found an oligarchy under the control of the greater nobles. So the German official Osterman saw his chance of persuading an assembly of magnates that the bureau-

cracy was best. Whereupon Anne, Peter's niece (1730-1740), who had married a German prince, brought in a fresh flood of Teutonic office-hunters. Biren, the son of one of her husband's grooms, was her chief favourite; and he piled up an enormous fortune out of the spoiling of the Russians. The two German ministers, Osterman and von Münnich, were serious and honest statesmen of their school, and really governed with a Fabian sort of efficiency; but that meant chiefly that they collected the taxes with a rigid hand.

So it is not surprising that the Russians were not reconciled to the German rule by such men; and Elizabeth, the next queen (1741-1762), the daughter of Peter the Great, gained the throne by a *coup d'état*, supported by the Russian party. True to her promises, she sent most of the German bureaucrats into Siberia, and replaced them by an admirable set of Russians under the control of Bestuzheff, who was incorruptibility itself. She despised Frederick the Great, whom she termed "The Shah of Berlin," and if she had lived a little longer her armies would in all probability have crushed him, and we might have been spared the "Prussian terror" altogether. She tried to make her nearest relation, the son of her sister, who had married a German duke, into a sound Russian. But he had a passion for everything German, and especially for Frederick the Great, with whom he hastened to make peace when he ascended the throne. But the Russians could not stand this Teutonic prince longer than a few months; and his remarkable wife gained the throne by a *coup d'état*, and became Catherine the Great.

Catherine II., who reigned 1762-1796, was one of those

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obliging persons who give our history books all the qualities of a well-written play. She won her place by riding at the head of the cavalry that seized the crown from her weak husband. Pure German though she was, it was as the head of a Russian party that she came into power; and throughout her reign it was almost exclusively Russian officials who controlled the national machinery. But be it noted that although this was a triumph for the Russians, yet it was a still greater triumph for Bureaucracy. For Catherine strengthened all the centralisation of power which Peter the Great had gathered together in Petersburg. The Teutonic spirit had fastened itself on Russia so clingly that it lived again in the Russians who took the German places. It was not merely the Teutonic officials who had begun to ruin Slav freedom; it was the offices, not the individuals who occupied them, that were the danger. If Catherine had meant to save her country from the peril, she would have abolished the offices, whereas she only changed their tenants.

Catherine was one of those persons of superabundant physical and mental energy who, somewhat by accident, take up social reform instead of fox-hunting and bridge. Catherine certainly had good brains and was very ambitious to display them to the best advantage. Like her friend, Frederick the Great, she had a fancy for the manners of the French Court, and for the surface polish at least of French literature. She had all sorts of good intentions concerning the duty of the ruler to the subject. But her ideas, after all, were mainly a greatly enlarged form of the plans of the lady bountiful who can be found in most villages. She did not regard

the poor as taking any active part in their own regeneration. They were to receive their salvation, ready-made, from baskets.

To a certain extent Catherine played up to the democratic notions she had learned from the West. When she was considering the possibility of drafting a new system of national law, she called together a grand Legislative Commission of about six hundred members, elected by a more or less popular vote of all classes in the state—nobles, officials, townsfolk and peasants. The electors gave instructions to their representatives; and Catherine presented to the Commission a lot of literary material which she had collected, chiefly from the works of Montesquieu, whom she said would have been canonised had she been Pope of Rome. She was quite candid about her literary sources; and told Frederick of Prussia: "I have done like the raven in the fable, which dressed himself in the plumes of the peacock; the arrangement alone is mine, and perhaps a line or a word here and there." The Commission held two or three hundred meetings and all kind of valiant things were said. But to feed the Russian peasant with a stew of Montesquieu and the French encyclopædia was very much like offering champagne and oysters to a school treat. The Commission dissolved without definite results; and such reforms as followed came from the autocratic will.

But with all her loud expressions of laudably democratic intentions, when they are analysed, most of Catherine's reforms strengthened the nobles and the bureaucrats more than the people. Such extensions of local government as there were mainly increased the

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power of the upper classes who controlled them. When it came to the point, Catherine did little that would offend the nobles and bureaucracy, on whom she relied for her support. All the reforms she drafted probably made her bureaucrats laugh in their sleeves, rather than shake in their shoes. At one time she talked of emancipating the serfs; but when it was clear that the nobles would object, the whole scheme was quietly dropped. Indeed in the district of Little Russia serfdom was introduced for the first time in this reign; that province having hitherto retained its peasant proprietorship as a rule. And the lords were allowed fuller powers of punishment over serfs who were disobedient. In short, the Teutonic Catherine, in spite of all her earnest endeavours to become Voltairean and French, left her Slav subjects still more enslaved than when she began to visit them with her basket of delicacies on her arm. When Pugachoff, the Don Cossack, led a peasants' rising in 1773, she crushed it with relentless force—which was perhaps excusable, since he professed to be her late husband, whose murder had been a necessary preliminary of her succession to the throne. Still, at least, it was a real rising of the peasants against autocratic masters, and Catherine was on the side of the masters.

But there was one thing Catherine did which was useful. She introduced her Court and her nobles to something better than the pigsty manners of Peter the Great. She had considerable personal taste in the arts and letters. Her correspondence with her philosophical friends is not the chattering of an idle woman; and her dramas show signs of serious endeavours. Anyhow,

she taught the best part of the old nobility of Russia the elements of social refinement. Peter the Great had got little further than an attempt to build Western warships ; but Catherine did try to import the best of the West instead of its worst, which was all that Peter the Boor had skimmed. To Catherine's endeavours in this direction Russia probably owes the happy fact that its aristocracy from that day has so often led the way in refinement and reform. From her day it has never been safe for the autocracy to rely on the united support of the noble class. Catherine taught the aristocrat to educate himself—instead of being merely a soldier, like his fellows in Prussia.

It was Catherine the Great who first put the old longings of the Russian rulers for Constantinople into more definite shape. She worked out an elaborate scheme with the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria, in which the Turkish power was to be expelled from Europe altogether ; and Russia and Austria were to share the remains between them. Russia was to come out of the transaction best, in so far as the grandson of Catherine was to be made a sort of revived Byzantine emperor of Constantinople. Turkey, quite naturally, disliked the whole scheme, and declared war in 1787. When peace was made in 1792, Russia was able to demand certain privileges for the Danubian provinces ; which was the beginning of an idea that was the keynote of Russia's Near East policy throughout the nineteenth century. The desire to reach and possess Constantinople itself was by no means the essence of these plans ; though Catherine herself certainly was only prevented by death from pursuing that side of her policy. She particularly

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avoided getting involved in the general alliance against France that followed the French Revolution ; much though she hated the outbreak when it tried to put into practice some of the ideas that had so pleased her in literary form—like Edmund Burke, who was running away from his ideals at the same time. But Catherine's chief reason for keeping clear of the alliance against France was that she might be in a position to attack Turkey while Europe was entirely occupied with France. But she died too soon to bring off the coup.

It was in the direction of Poland that she made the other definite step in Russian history. Poland was a Slav state which had grown up, apparently, without the dominance of any external race ; unlike the case of Russia, where the first ruling race was Teutonic. It is interesting to see that it was probably the democratic communism of the Slavic mind which prevented the growth of a strong monarchy in Poland. But the necessity of defending themselves against the Germans on their west obliged the Poles to tolerate a military class which put on the airs of a feudal aristocracy, and eventually became a ruling oligarchy in the country. Since there was no strong monarchy to stand against it, this oligarchy took a very selfish form. In one other particular Poland was distinguished from its Slavic neighbour, Russia ; for it adopted the Roman form of Christianity instead of the Greek form. It did this to obtain the help of the Pope in holding back the attacks of the Teutonic knights of Germany.

By Catherine's time the Polish nobles had developed all the characteristics of a very tyrannical caste, and the peasants were among the most oppressed in Europe.

Poland, for various local reasons, is probably the most unfortunate example of social organisation that a Slav people has produced. Though it was, perhaps, a contorted kind of democracy in this oligarchy, by which one noble could veto any measure before the Diet, that may have been the main cause of the failure.

It was this state, without national boundaries of any kind worth mentioning, that Catherine and Frederick the Great decided to share between them, allowing Austria enough to keep it from raising objections. Thus by three partitions, 1772, 1793, and 1795, the ancient kingdom of Poland was divided, Russia getting the eastern side, known now as White Russia; Prussia getting the part on the west and on the Baltic coast; and Austria getting what is now known as Galicia. Before the partition Catherine, in 1763, had made the Polish nobles choose her Polish lover, Stanislaus Poniatowski, as their king; for, as she said, "he had least right of all to the crown, and must therefore feel more indebted to Russia than anyone else"—a rather interesting example of the free and easy manners of Russian autocracy! It is necessary to note this partition of Poland, for it is the key to the problem of its proposed restoration by Russia at the present time.

Catherine's grandson, Alexander I., who ascended the throne in 1801, was the first Russian Tsar to take the leading place in the European politics of his day. He emerged as the most dominant figure in Europe after the collapse of the Napoleonic Empire. It was the disaster of the Moscow campaign which had shaken Napoleon's power past rebuilding; so Alexander was certainly entitled to a hand in the great settlement. His was

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a personality of considerable complexity. His early training had been conducted by Laharpe, a Swiss disciple of Rousseau and the democratic movement of the Revolution period. It is not surprising that Alexander had no preconceived objection to the French ideas that were surging over Europe, considering this early training and the tradition of his grandmother Catherine's Voltairean philosophy. During the early part of Napoleon's career the two monarchs more or less came to terms to help each other's plans of conquest. At their famous meeting at Tilsit in 1807 they had agreed to a division of the whole world between them. But this somewhat premature plan broke down when it became evident that Napoleon really wanted the whole—not half. So Alexander smashed Napoleon at Moscow, and took a very leading part in the final pursuit of the Emperor to Paris itself.

But Alexander's greatest service to civilisation was when he stood up for the rights of France (directly Napoleon was beaten) to maintain her national unity as it had existed before the ambitious Emperor arrived on the scene. Teutonic Prussia was calling out for a tearing of France, limb from limb; it was the Slav autocrat of Russia who refused to allow the first democracy of Europe to be annihilated by its enemies.

But Alexander went much further. He has not yet been given his due credit for being the first statesman in Europe to propose a definite substitute for the rule of brute force. With full admission of its many limitations, Alexander's scheme of a Holy Alliance of the European sovereigns was a very great step forward in the theory of international relations. The proposal

was that henceforward the policy of the nations should be governed by the "sacred principles of the Christian religion," the laws of charity, justice and peace. No one will deny that the idea bordered at that time on the impossible, and that Alexander had too much of the paternal autocrat behind his theory to make it acceptable to real democrats. But it is surely surprising that the first proposal to apply Christianity to diplomacy should have been received by the Christian states of Europe with badly concealed laughter and contempt. Whatever opinion one may have of the Christian religion, as a basis for politics, it is certainly to be preferred to the current system of governing by gunpowder and swords.

The Holy Alliance was signed, but of course very few of the signatories thought it much more than a well-organised farce; and Metternich, the autocrat of Vienna, at once set himself to teach the idealist of Moscow the ways of this wicked world. But even when Alexander realised that his paternal scheme was not favourably received by the reforming elements of his kingdom, he yet clung to his ideal. In 1818, when the Allied armies had been withdrawn from France, and that country was to be invited to take her place once more in the council of nations, Alexander tried hard to arrange that this council should be much wider than the four Great Powers of the Quadruple Alliance—England, Russia, Austria and Prussia. He wanted, instead, that it should be an assembly of the nations of the Holy Alliance, which in theory was to be all Christendom.

The proposal was cynically interpreted as an attempt on the part of Alexander to rope some more nations within the sweep of his power. But there is really little

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reason to doubt his sincerity ; for he was so consistent in his suggestion. When his proposal was rejected, Alexander then protested against the Quadruple Alliance deciding the affairs of the small states without calling them in for consultations. There was evidently need for Metternich to continue his lessons in reaction to the Slav monarch. Unfortunately the revolution in Naples gave Metternich the excuse he needed to appeal to Alexander to coerce the rebels, but the Tsar protested against being personally called in by the Emperor of Austria when the matter should have been referred to the united judgment of the Holy Alliance. In other words, he again showed his sincerity to his principles of collective arbitration, by sacrificing his own position to his ideal.

Practically the same thing happened in the case of the Greek revolution. When Alexander had a really good excuse for appearing in Greece as its saviour from Turkey—a course of action for which his whole people clamoured—he declared that he had no right to interfere except on behalf of the Alliance of Europe. Metternich was continually able to score over Russia, mainly because Alexander refused to be unscrupulous also. The greatest weakness of Russian diplomacy for the last hundred years has been its straightforward sincerity and general unselfishness. Later, in 1824, when the Russian war party was pressing him to take further action, Alexander again tried to persuade the other Powers that if Greece was to be made autonomous it should be under the suzerainty of Turkey, and at the joint demand, and with the guarantee, of the European Concert. Metternich, with strong signs of insincerity, tried to go one better, and refused to accept any solution except the

complete independence of Greece. But this proposal the Tsar was disinclined to accept; and the impartial observer will surely hesitate to censure his hesitation in replacing the rule of the Mohammedan by the rule of the Christian Greek, with thoughtless haste. The war of Greek independence had been opened by the Greeks with a savage massacre of Turkish men, women and children, which might have made the onlooker wonder whether, after all, the case for Christian rebels was as conclusive as Western Europe hastily assumed.

But at this moment the Tsar, who had heroically attempted to convert the Western Courts to the elements of Christianity, died; and the throne was occupied by Nicholas I., 1825-1855, who was in every way more suitable for Western comprehension. The modern diplomats of London and Berlin, of Paris and Vienna, have generally shown a disposition to understand the soldier and the merchant with more intimate ease than the mystic and the philosopher. As Canning said, with half-conscious irony, when he reported on Alexander's scheme of a Concert of Europe and a general disarmament: "The system tended to a perfection not applicable to this age nor to mankind . . . it is a beautiful phantom which England cannot pursue; for all speculative policy is outside the range of her faculties." There for the moment we must leave the defeated mystic Alexander; merely recommending to those people who continually chatter of Russian militarism the fact that it was a Russian Tsar who first begged Europe to disband its armies. It was Western Europe that refused.

It is worth remembering that the autocratic soldier Nicholas did not succeed to the throne without a protest

from his subjects. The nobles of the army had not forgotten the principles of democracy that were the fashionable literary refreshments served in Catherine's saloons; and they had amplified the lessons in greater detail during their campaigns in the west against the French Emperor. As continually happens, the conquering soldier found himself rather helplessly entangled in the higher civilisation of his fallen foe. It was the officers of the army that rose in semi-socialistic revolution with the excuse of putting Constantine on the throne instead of his autocratic brother. That the rebels were ever able to strike was due to the (somewhat theoretical) liberalism which made Alexander refuse to crush the secret revolutionary societies, though he knew perfectly well they were at work.

The foreign policy of Russia by this time had mainly concentrated on the Near East. Perhaps the natural tendency of Nicholas's mind was to regard the affairs of Turkey as peculiarly the concern of Russia, without consulting the Western Powers. But in practice he did everything reasonable to work with these states. However, it would require, and still requires, more than ordinary saintliness and patience to await until the mutual jealousies of the Western governments had decided on some common action. The statesmen of the West have rarely considered the problem of the Near East in any other light than its possible effect on their own interests. They talk a great deal about the miserable conditions of the Christian subjects under the Turkish rule; but that has generally been a pious pose. England, for example, has cared very little about the massacred Christians; she has cared

a great deal about the safety of her highway to India.

When Nicholas occupied the northern principalities of Turkey in 1828, as part of a general scheme to put pressure on the Sultan to reform his government, it was only after a definite promise to claim none of his conquests as the private property of Russia. When his army was able to exact terms, almost at the gates of Constantinople, Nicholas was true to his word, and the conquered provinces were given a constitution which made them almost independent states, under the clauses of the Peace of Adrianople, 1829. It was the direct result of this action by Russia that compelled the Western Powers to continue the process by acknowledging the independence of Greece also ; but it seems to have been less out of regard for the Greeks than in the hope that a free Greece might prove a bulwark against Russia.

At home Nicholas was no doubt the rigid autocrat ; and he was ready to help his Austrian fellow-despot to crush the Hungarian rebellion of 1848. Without his assistance, the Vienna Government would have been helpless ; yet Nicholas asked nothing in return for his aid ; and after the Hungarians were beaten he withdrew his army without demanding an inch of territory in payment.

When he was in London in 1844, Nicholas had endeavoured to convince the British Government that the property of Turkey, the " Sick Man " of Constantinople, must soon be divided amongst his legitimate heirs. The cynical had certainly every right to suspect that there was a selfish aim behind the proposal ; but so far as the actual terms went, Nicholas suggested that the European

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provinces of Turkey should be made into self-governing states, though they were to be under the protection of Russia. This was obviously open to the suspicion of an interested motive on the part of the Tsar. Nevertheless, the question was, had anybody got a better plan? These European peoples had been conquered by an utterly alien power. Was that conquest to remain for ever? Were the Balkan states yet fit to stand alone? If not, was there any fitter power than Russia to stand over them? In 1852 Nicholas again raised this question of Turkey in the same form as he had done in 1844.

If the European states had agreed to leave the Sultan's government altogether alone, they would have been perfectly logical in telling the Tsar that he must not interfere either. But when Napoleon claimed rights over the Roman Catholics of Turkey, and Austria interfered in Montenegro, then it was not fair to blame the Tsar when he reasserted his more plausible rights to protect the interests of those subjects of the Sultan who professed the faith of the Eastern Christian Church. The Western Powers encouraged Turkey to resist this claim of protection. But the Tsar was determined to maintain his ground: and the result was the Crimean War of 1854-1855. Russia was beaten by the Allies, Britain, France, Sardinia (soon to become united to Italy), fighting professedly on the side of Turkey. The result in brief was that the Powers, by the Treaty of Paris, 1856, recognised the Sultan's government as supreme over all his subjects; in return for which acknowledgment the Sultan gave a vague promise of "generous intentions" towards his Christian peoples. Looking back on this treaty, down the vista of history, we can judge its worth-

lessness. He must be a simple soul who can still think that by the Crimean War the Western Allies in any way upheld the cause of righteous government. They only confirmed the Turks in their callousness. But one need not insult the Allies by suggesting that they were in earnest when they professed to be acting for the good of the weak in Turkey. If they were in earnest, then most assuredly they were simple fools.

Nicholas died a broken man, when he saw that his country was beaten. But it was not only in foreign affairs that he saw his defeat. His internal policy, also, had dismally failed. His autocracy would appear to have been part of an honest desire to serve his people. He had crushed democracy because he conceived of it as something standing in the way of his better judgment. It was a very foolish judgment, undoubtedly; but Nicholas was not the first good man who had been gripped by bureaucracy like a vice, almost against his will. The story goes that as he lay dying, Nicholas half confessed his disillusionment, his knowledge of his failure, when he murmured: "My successor may do as he pleases; but I cannot change." That rather pathetic word "cannot" was the measure of the relentless triumph of the bureaucratic machine, crushing its friends as well as its foes.

It was during the reign of Alexander II., 1855-1881, that the modern reform movement in Russia began to take a persistent and organised shape. In approaching that subject, let no one imagine that everything bearing the label "Reform" is entitled to the name. For in that case it would include such strange abortions as the changes of Peter the Great, which almost ruined Russia, if their

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historical result be any guide. But the point will be better appreciated as the facts are disclosed.

The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was one of those steps very necessary for the maintenance of human dignity, but one which had no very immediate effect ; its benefits were rather that it gave the peasants an added sense of personal freedom and responsibility. The peasants have, in a material sense, less share in the wealth of the land than they had before their emancipation. But Alexander II. and his Government deserve every credit for its accomplishment. Next, in 1864, the *zemstva*, or county councils, were instituted on the basis of a fairly democratic electorate of all classes ; and in the same year the judicial system was radically reformed.

But there was a strongly entrenched party of reactionaries surrounding the Tsar and his Government. Some of them were real Russians, of whom Count Dimitry Tolstoy, the Minister of Public Instruction, was the worst. Even the Tsar had to tell him that his report on the subject of the emancipation of the serfs was "not a criticism, but a lampoon." But the heart of the reactionary gang were the German landlords of the Baltic provinces ; who, for some reason or another, had great influence at Court. The fact adds only another to the vast accumulations of proof that the German race has been the chief curse of Russia, throughout its history, excepting perhaps Catherine the Great. All the reform brought into being by Alexander II. at the beginning of his reign was clogged by a web of bureaucratic regulations which took the heart out of most of them. The press was censored in a ridiculous

way; the anti-Socialist Herbert Spencer, and the Tory Lecky were kept out of Russia as though they had been the seven plagues of the East.

The Nihilist movement was by this time gradually asserting its right to a place amongst the philosophies of life. Known to the man-in-the-street as a bomb-throwing sect, it was primarily a literary and scientific coterie, the basis of which was a materialist conception of the universe. Its disciples liked to talk of human society and its passions in terms of zoology and physiology. Translated into the political sphere, it is not surprising that these realists expressed themselves in the cruder forms of gunpowder. Their opponents were unsuitable and inconvenient forms of animal life: therefore it was best to kill them.

Nihilism was almost entirely the product of the university student, and its disciples were generally of middle-class and aristocratic birth. It was the revolt of the individual intellect because it was denied its proper share in the social organisation of its country. It was one form of the rising of the Slav spirit against the bureaucracy; in the same way that the Celtic spirit rose against the centralised autocracy of the Bourbons of France. In Prussia the Teuton accepted the bureaucracy and autocracy as a sheep accepts its butcher. In Russia and in France the people revolted.

But there was a fact which made Nihilism an almost impossible factor in Russian life. In the words of Stephniak: "The fundamental principle of Nihilism was absolute individualism." Now the fundamental principle of Slav society is communism. There is no need to labour the incompatibility of a successful alliance

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between the two. As a matter of fact in its pure form Nihilism did not long survive. It quickly passed from individualism to a theory of social organisation of a socialistic nature. The bomb-throwing terrorist side has lingered on in some degree from an utter despair of otherwise making any impression on the concrete ranks of the bureaucracy. Bomb-throwing is usually the expression of helpless despair. It is the absence of the courage of unconquerable patience. And, beyond that, one must always remember that in so far as Nihilists and revolutionaries have desired a brand-new society, they are little better than Peter the Great. And in so far as they were materialists, they were not typical Slavs.

Right in the middle of the reform period of Alexander's reign, the Polish insurrection broke out. The popular historian has usually classed it with the other national attempts to overthrow the tyranny of an alien power. But that judgment should not be hastily applied to any of the insurrections of Poland. As a matter of fact, the policy of the Russian Government, since it had absorbed Poland, had been to favour the down-trodden peasants at the expense of the particularly tyrannical nobles ; who, as already noted, were perhaps the worst in Europe. The revolt of 1863 was not a national rising ; it was an attempt of the noble class, who tried without success to persuade the peasants to fight on their side. The rebellion was conducted by a secret society of terrorists ; and Western Europe was sadly duped if it thought the liberty of a people was the main thing at stake. Anyhow, when the revolt was crushed, the first act of the Tsar was to publish a decree which gave half

the nobles' land to the peasants in full proprietorship, and the feudal dues were swept away. It is facts such as these that take much of the heroic stuffing out of the romance of Polish freedom, and must also make one reconsider the exact weight of the many crimes usually ascribed to Russian autocracy.

The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 is an altogether illuminating episode in the history of the nation. Never in this history had the Russians been more conscious of their Slav unity than since they had been beaten in the Crimean War. Their desire to set free their bound brothers in the Balkans was a very real thing; Russia's Near East policy had become a much deeper national desire than the diplomatic scheming of Catherine the Great. Western Europe had practically given the Turk a free hand, and had thwarted Russia's attempt to place limits to Turkish misgovernment. Now, no fair mind can lay the whole blame on the Turk. Time and again he has taught the European that the Mohammedan can be a gentleman while the Christian is still behaving like a savage. We have already seen that the Greeks were the first to begin ruthless massacre in their revolt against Turkey. Now again, when rebellion raised its head in Herzegovina in 1875, peaceful Mohammedans seem to have been the first to be murdered in cold blood. But all that was beside the main question: How was it possible for Europeans to be ruled by any Turkish government, however just it might be? Russia had faced that question: Western Europe had not.

The Balkan revolt spread to Bulgaria in 1876; where once more it would seem that the murdering began on the Christian side. The Sultan gave promises of reform;

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but it was not unreasonable if the rebels attached little importance to vague generalities. Servia and Montenegro, in July 1876, next took up arms against the Turks. The Bulgarian atrocities in May had horrified the civilised world, especially Mr Gladstone, who preached the doctrine that the Turk must be put out of Europe, "bag and baggage." The Balkans felt that the moment had come; yet they were rather helpless without the backing of the Great Powers. But only the Russians were really in earnest in going to their aid.

The Sultan went so far as a formal promise of a constitutional government for his whole kingdom, with all the political trappings that attend the government of a Western State. But Russia (one says Russia advisedly, for in this war the people were behind the Tsar and his Government, pushing them on if they slackened in their demands on Constantinople) refused to believe that a Turkish Government would fulfil any promises so long as it remained independent and the supreme ruler in the provinces affected. So Russia went to war, because it wanted something more substantial than another promise. The Tsar gave Europe a solemn promise that he would not occupy Constantinople or establish even a protectorate over any of the provinces, and that the whole settlement would be referred to the Great Powers for their approval. All of which obligations were honourably fulfilled. After many serious reverses, the Russians were at Adrianople in January 1878; and fulfilling the promise not to enter Constantinople, the Tsar allowed the beaten Sultan to offer terms of peace. They were signed in the Treaty of San Stefano; whereby Turkey recognised the full independence of Roumania, Servia and Montenegro;

while Bulgaria, enlarged to the south coast, and practically including the whole of the remainder of European Turkey (except Constantinople and its immediate district) was to be a self-governing state, although still owing allegiance to the Sultan. The Balkan question had never been so successfully and liberally handled. The settlement was a credit to Russia's intellect and unselfish honour.

It was Western Europe, and particularly England, that insisted on tearing up the Treaty of San Stefano and replacing it by the far less satisfactory Treaty of Berlin, 1878. This certainly left Roumania, Servia and Montenegro free. But the new Bulgaria was divided up once more and thrown to the Turks again in fragments, at their mercy; Macedonia, the seat of Balkan misrule, was handed over completely to the Sultan again; the Rumelia district was to be half free; while only the north was to be given the right to choose its own ruler, who, moreover, must be acceptable to the Sultan. While Austria was given suzerainty over Bosnia and Herzegovina—in other words, a Slav people were handed over to the dominion of an alien Teutonic race; whereas, under the Treaty of San Stefano, both these provinces were to be self-governing, under the united protection of Austria and Russia. In short, if Western Europe was not ashamed of its handiwork in Berlin, she had every reason to be. Since that day Macedonia has remained the cesspool of bad government; and it is Western Europe that is responsible, if historical judgments have any weight in the moral world.

To the enthusiastic Slavs behind the Tsar in his war, this Treaty of Berlin was a defeat. The revolutionary

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movement had thrown itself into the national rush. It turned on its Government with revived anger when the defeat came. A violent outburst of anarchy followed, especially in the winter of 1878-1879. The Tsar was by no means inclined to put down the agitation by sheer force alone. He appointed Melikoff dictator, who pardoned prisoners by the hundred, and advised Alexander to grant a constitution. On the very day on which, in the Tsar's own words, "I have just signed a paper which I hope will show Russia that I grant her everything that is possible," Alexander was blown to pieces by a bomb. It would be a hasty thing to decide too quickly whether that bomb was thrown by a Nihilist reformer or a reactionary who dreaded reform. There have been too many instances in recent Russian history where the "revolutionist" has shown most suspicious signs of being an agent of the bureaucrats' police system. If the people will not commit violence, it is sometimes necessary to do it for them!

Anyhow the next Tsar, Alexander III., who reigned 1881-1894, took full advantage of the general public disapproval of the assassination to offer a stubborn opposition to any further development of the reforms passed by his father. Alexander III. was one of those terrible obstacles to all reforms—an earnest, honest man, who added to many virtues the worst vice a dull thinker can possess—an unshakable sense of duty in the service of his people. But there was one supremely wise thing about him: he had a horror lest his country should be swamped by a mass of Western administrative and political machinery which was utterly unsuited to the Slav society as it had evolved in Russia.

The position will be better realised if one considers for a moment the remarkable man who now appeared as the dead wall against which the revolutionary movement was to shatter its forces for so many years. Pobedonostseff had been Alexander's tutor, and his influence was summed up in the document (which he probably himself wrote, and certainly inspired) issued by the Tsar on his accession to the throne. It ran: "The voice of God orders us to stand firm at the helm of government with faith in the strength and truth of the autocratic power, which we are called to strengthen and preserve, for the good of the people, from every kind of encroachment." The first impression of such a document is that it is undiluted rubbish. But a closer inspection of the political philosophy behind it shows a startling amount of sanity.

Pobedonostseff flatly refused to believe that Western Europe had improved its position by replacing a mediæval polity by the modern parliamentarism and all that goes with it. He said that modern Europe was not an example for Russia to follow. It was a warning of what to avoid. He said a Parliament chamber was a place mainly useful for the furtherance of sordid ambitions; the press was the chief scatterer of lies; trial by jury had little result but to give the advocate his chance in "the arts of casuistry." Now Pobedonostseff was usually considered to be the most reactionary person in Europe. The astounding thing is that the above articles of his creed have a strange reminiscent tone of the remarks one hears in the most revolutionary sets of the West. When Alexander and Pobedonostseff refused to give the Russian people a Parliament, one suddenly realises that they

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would probably have had the hearty support of Mr Tom Mann and the syndicalist parties of England, France and Italy ; while the dangers of the press are the common topic of every circle whose advanced ideas are overwhelmed by a mass of conventional commonplaces in the daily papers.

It is clear that Pobedonostseff must not be so hurriedly dismissed as many earnest Radical clubs would doubtless desire. Where this Russian statesman failed was in the nerve which becomes all masters of his craft. He was so appalled by the mistakes that were being made in Western Europe that he gave up the problem and could think of nothing better than standing perfectly still. He appears to have forgotten that most of the evils of Russian life had been brought from the West, and that the most reactionary of Russians was surely entitled to clear away the imported rubbish before he turned into a fossil. It was during the time of Pobedonostseff's influence that the Government enacted the law that restricted the sale of communal lands outside the membership of the commune. Now here was a law passed by the autocracy which had for its main effect the protection of communism. Such is one of the many strange anomalies which continued to crop up in the history of the reform movement in Russia. It is an example of how it is sometimes better to stand still rather than to go on. Why not forbid such a good institution as the communal lands to change themselves into something worse ?

It was Alexander III., the type of autocracy, as some hold (in many ways with perfect justice), who threw over the alliance with his fellow-autocrat, the Emperor of Germany, and opened up negotiations with the democratic

Republic of France ; though the bond was not formally announced until 1895. In the Balkans Alexander pursued an unassuming policy, not even making an undue fuss when Bulgaria, which had gained a constitution by the aid of Russia in 1878, turned against its friend and allowed its chief minister, M. Stanboloff, to oppose Russian interests at every turn. That is another example of how little personal return Russia gets for all her endeavours on behalf of the Balkan peoples. But during Alexander's time Russia was mainly concerned in absorbing Asia into the already vast dominions of its empire.

Perhaps the chief characteristic of this reign was the clear beginnings of the industrial capitalist epoch in Russia. It was first systematically engineered under the guidance of Count Witte, who was in office during the years 1892-1903. It has been well said that he "committed Russia irrevocably to the capitalist system." So far in its evolution Russia had got on without a trading middle class of a size worth mentioning in comparison with the agricultural peasant element. Even now, of course, Russia is not affected by modern industry as Germany is. Still, the artisans of the town are becoming a vital factor in political affairs ; and it is the new middle class that is the loudest in the clamour for a parliamentary constitution. Hitherto in Europe a parliament has been the inevitable result of an influential trading class. The same result appears likely to follow in Russia.

Witte was the typical Whig statesman : he was in Russia what Peel and Gladstone were in England—men who played with democracy for the advantage of the middle-class capitalists. It is interesting to observe the

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struggle that took place between Witte and Plehva. Plehva was the final expression of the bureaucracy. It had been bad enough before ; but he turned it into a vast machine worked by police agents. It was the admission of the bureaucrats that they could only hold their position against the rising people by the arm of the police. It was rather the flag of despair than the assertion of strength. By his attempt, successful attempt, to push Witte, the leader of the middle-class capitalists, out of the way, Plehva showed that the bureaucracy is not working in that close co-operation with the new rich trading class, after the manner that the Western democrat accuses the bureaucracy of his own country. One finds, for example, the Minister of the Interior, Plehva, instructing his officials to discreetly encourage the factory workers to unrest ; and on closer analysis it appears probable that this was done mainly to annoy the factory inspectors appointed by Witte, the Minister of Finance. In other words, it really looks as though the Russian bureaucracy is a close corporation, which is fighting for its own interests against all other classes whatsoever—even against the privileged wealthy classes.

The suspicion is confirmed when one finds continual evidence that the bureaucracy acts directly against the orders of even the Crown, when it suits its purpose. The Tsar has signed laws, and the bureaucrats have more or less flatly disobeyed them. This has happened, for example, in the case of regulations which tended to strengthen the local powers of the zemstvo. One of the most astounding revelations of this conflict of authorities occurred when Prince Urusoff was Assistant Minister of the Interior in the Cabinet of Count Witte. The prince,

in the course of his duties, discovered that the ghastly massacres of 1905 were being organised by the Police Department, acting through a secret printing press in Petersburg. He told the astounding story in a speech in the Duma : his words are a historical document of infinite importance in the history of Russia. " An officer of the gendarmerie in mufti, Komissaroff, worked the press, and with the help of a few assistants prepared the proclamations. . . . Not only in the Ministry, but even in the Department of the Police, there were few people who knew of its existence. . . . Komissaroff, in answer to someone who stumbled on it by chance, said : ' We can arrange any massacre you like ; a massacre of ten or a massacre of ten thousand.' Sir, this phrase is historical. I may add that in Kiev a massacre of ten thousand had been arranged to take place on February 3rd, but it was successfully averted."

Prince Urusoff told the Duma that the formal government was helpless in the hands of an organisation of which no one knew the centre : " It is clear that the chief organisers and inspirers are outside the sphere of the government ; and as far as their business is concerned it is equally indifferent to them whether the Minister of the Interior will observe a benevolent neutrality toward them or take a line of opposition. Further, I affirm that no ministry, even if it were chosen from the Duma, could restore order in the country so long as certain unknown persons who stand outside, behind an impassable barrier, continue to lay their brutal fingers on certain parts of the machine of State. . . . We feel that those dark forces are arising against us, and dividing us from the Crown, and are preventing the Crown from having confidence in

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us. . . . We continue to feel the influence of men who have the education of policemen and sergeants, and are massacre-mongers on principle."

Such was the astounding statement made by a man who had gained his information as a Minister of the Tsar ; and he was openly addressing the most responsible assembly of the empire. It proves a whole series of extraordinary facts ; or, rather, extraordinary to those who have accepted the conventional myths that have hitherto veiled Russia in an Oriental mystery. For one thing it shows that free speech has asserted its rights over the censorship to a most useful degree. Next, it shows that revolutionary ideas have broken down the class barriers. Then it suggests that the Tsar and his Government are being coerced by some superior power which has them in its grip. Above all, it suggests that a set of persons, the Bureaucracy, are the rulers of Russia ; and that their main governing force is a secret police.

When Nicholas II. succeeded his father in 1894 there was a formal announcement that no change was to be made in the autocratic policy of Alexander III. But in practice it was felt that a somewhat gentler influence was at work, so far as the formal hand of the State was concerned. Nicholas had the amiability which, in his earlier days, easily passed into weak will. At the beginning of his reign it resulted in further triumphs for the Bureaucracy. Pobedonostseff, the man who rejected all change on principle, still was the prompting voice behind the monarch. The censorship and persecution of the "intellectuals" became still more intolerable ; the peasants were pushed further into the morass of poverty by the increasing weight of taxation which a corrupt

bureaucracy extracted from them under the pretence of developing the services of the country ; the freedoms of Finland were again attacked by the taking away of much of its constitutional autonomy.

But the bureaucrats were more urgent in their methods, not because they were more powerful, but rather because the threatening advance of the democracy was more imminent. Unlike the Prussian and the Germans, generally, the Slavs have never given up the fight against tyranny. Tyranny has done many terrible things in Russia ; but it has never gripped the public spirit. Even away back in 1878, when Vera Zasúlich had put a bullet through the Governor of Petersburg because he dared to flog a prisoner for not saluting him, the Government was powerless when a jury acquitted her, and a mob rescued her in safety at the door of the court. The people were in fact increasing in strength every year ; it was the bureaucrat who was nearing his fate.

The defeat of the Russians by the Japanese during the years 1904-1905 brought the issue to a very definite head. It was the bureaucracy that was defeated in this war far more than the Russian nation. It was owing to the barefaced corruption of the officials that the war went so disastrously ; they stole the war supplies like a pack of low thieves ; and when there was a popular demand that the robbery should be stopped, Plehva, the chief spirit of the gang, made vicious attempts to quell the criticism. In July 1904 he was blown to pieces by a bomb in Petersburg. It is illuminating to know that the man who arranged his assassination was Aveff, a police agent who had been employed in inciting the Socialists to rebellion. The same man also planned the

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murder of the Grand Duke Sergius in 1905. The two deaths appear to have given universal satisfaction to almost every element in Russia.

It was the beginning of a general rising against masters of all kinds. The peasants burned the manor-houses, as the peasants of France had done in the Great Revolution. The artisans of the towns threw down their tools ; the clerks threw down their pens ; soldiers deserted ; students and professional men, lawyers and town councils, one and all turned in criticism of the Government of Russia. On 22nd January 1905 a great crowd of workers approached the Tsar's palace as a deputation, led by the somewhat mysterious Father Gapon ; they were shot down by hundreds by the soldiers. The Government plunged wildly in its attempts to crush the general unrest. Then it offered a Duma ; but it was to be consultative only. The agitation continued with contempt for the offer. On 20th October the railwaymen of Moscow struck work ; and almost in a flash the workers of the whole empire followed their example. The troops were ordered not to spare their cartridges ; and the chief result of the threat was that almost all the professional and clerical classes joined the strikers also. Russia showed that all the bureaucrats in Christendom could not shake its resolve. By 30th October the Tsar had issued a manifesto promising freedom of speech and the right of association ; and that no law should be valid without the consent of the promised Duma ; while Count Witte replaced Pobedonostseff, who was removed from the council chamber.

The bureaucrats thought that these reforms meant the beginning of their end ; and they began a most

violent attempt to regain their position before it was too late. The extreme revolutionaries replied by asking still better terms. The police organised massacres of the Jews and the revolutionaries; the workers' committee of Petersburg ordered another general strike. The navy mutinied. Witte in despair gave concessions all round; he cancelled the censorship of the press; he gave economic assistance to the peasants. But nothing could satisfy the demands of the reformers, except everything they asked for! So Durnovo, the Chief of the Police, was given a free hand to try all the brute force he could command. The result, amongst other things, was a wild rising in Moscow in December 1905. It failed, in fact; but Witte was so alarmed that he issued a decree which practically allowed the coming Duma to be chosen by universal male suffrage. But before that Duma arrived the brutal Durnovo began massacring the peasants who had long ago ceased all violence against property—they had almost always respected life. The unconquerable revolutionaries replied by innumerable assassinations of officials. The officials organised more slaughters. It was at this moment that Prince Urusoff appealed to the Premier, Witte, to stop the police from inciting to crime: and Witte dared not interfere because of the powerful gang behind the police. This incident has already been referred to; it is worth repeating, for it exposes the root of the bureaucratic conspiracy.

Beyond the first meeting of the Duma, May 1906, it is not necessary to go in this sketch. The main point has been sufficiently stated. After centuries of autocratic government the Russian Slav still refuses to be sat upon by an official class. The German really respects his

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bureaucrats; the Slav has a most deplorable habit of shooting them. The Duma is now well started in its work of struggling with the bureaucracy on a slightly new basis. It still remains to be seen whether the parliament in Russia will ever take the place that it now occupies in Western nations. The main problem in Russia is not whether it will quickly imitate the system of the West, but how long it will resist it.

So far the centralising officialdom has failed to make much impression on the communal life of the Slav. It is still something outside his daily affairs. Again, the industrial revolution, which has turned Western Europe into nations controlled by manufacturers and bankers, has only touched the surface of the vast peasant communism of the great Russian Empire. When the ordinary man says that Russia is not yet "modern," he intends a reproach. Perhaps when we used that phrase we might be wiser if we suggested the tone of a congratulation. On examination, one begins to wonder whether it may not be the mission of the Russian people to teach Europe, instead of learning from it, as we so immodestly assume.

Quite recently, for example, it has been a Tsar of Russia who has made one more attempt to do what his ancestor Alexander I. failed in doing a hundred years ago. We have seen how the latter suggested a Holy Alliance of Christendom which was in time to take the place of armaments, as the governing force. In the year 1898 the present Tsar, Nicholas II., issued to the European Powers a manifesto which asked whether it was not time to again reconsider that question. "Hundreds of millions," he said, "are devoted to

acquiring terrible engines of destruction which, though to-day regarded as the last word of science, are destined to-morrow to lose all value, in consequence of some fresh discovery in the same field. National culture, economic progress, and the production of wealth are either paralysed or checked in their development. . . . It appears evident then that, if this state of things were prolonged, it would inevitably lead to the very cataclysm which it is designed to avert, and the horrors of which make every thinking man shudder in advance."

What happened at The Hague Conference which followed this invitation from Russia ? France welcomed the idea ; Bulgaria, speaking for the smaller states, did likewise. It was Germany that laughed it out of court as the fad of a Utopian. Suffice it, in the midst of the cataclysm, to record the fact that Russia, the unreformed, the autocratic, the semi-barbaric, as some men say, tried in vain to teach Western Europe the most elementary principles of a civilisation which the West prefers to prate about in theory instead of put in practice.

VI: AUSTRIA AND SERVIA

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

It is not always that Fate has a very good reason to give for her fickle workings ; but she had one excuse when the Empire of Austria came out of the melting-pot of history. It was surely convenient to have specimens of all the races of Europe gathered together, as specimens are gathered in a scientific laboratory ; so that their problems could be studied without undue fatigue to the inquiring minds that are interested in such matters. Throughout its history the empire that has grown round Vienna has been the meeting-place of the conflicting European peoples. There the Celt, the Slav, the Hun, the Magyar, the Teuton and the Turk have met face to face—and usually each with his hand at the other's throat. Like a vital strategic position on the field of battle, Vienna, with its kingdom, has been taken and retaken by the opposing armies ; sometimes by physical assault, sometimes by the more subtle, but far more effective, invasion of the mind.

The Austrian-Hungarian Empire is the racial and political laboratory of Europe. It was not by chance that the Great War of 1914 broke out within its borders ; and it was equally inevitable that Serbia should give the first sign of the tumult. In every sense of the phrase, this Great War is the gigantic enlargement of the

elementary struggle between the Teuton and the Alpine race. The struggle began as the attempt of Teutonic Vienna to crush Slavic Serbia. All that has followed is merely the infinite multiplication of the same simple factors of the fight. It has simply added more Teutons on one side and more Slavs and their Celtic cousins on the other. Serbia began because it was the nearest point at which the Slav problem touched Vienna. But this position will be more clearly seen after an examination of the elementary facts of the history of these two states.

Austria began her history almost exactly in the same manner as Prussia. The nucleus of the future empire was a Teutonic Mark, or kingdom of defence, against the Slavs on the eastern boundary of the Frankish Empire. That was exactly the reason for the foundation of the Mark of Brandenburg, which grew, as we have seen, into the kingdom of Prussia. It is very remarkable when one considers how little is the change accomplished by centuries of history. Here, for example, we find Prussia and Austria engaged in fulfilling their earliest object in life, still occupied in resisting the Slavs.

It was about A.D. 800 that Charlemagne erected this defensive Mark. It lay on the south bank of the Danube; and its position is still defined by the existing provinces of Upper and Lower Austria, though these now cover a larger area than the original Mark, which scarcely stretched more than sixty miles along the river bank. But although this was the foundation of the Austria as we now know it, there had already been a long history which is of interest for our present purpose.

In its first historical period this part of Europe had been inhabited by the Celtic branch of the Alpine stock,

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before that great family had been so divided by the purer Teutonic invasion driving down into Central Europe. This Celtic race was conquered by the Romans about 14 B.C. ; and it was thus more affected by Latin civilisation than the Prussian lands farther north, which were never so conquered. As the Romans withdrew, there followed successive waves of Huns, Slavs of the Slovenes branch, and Avars. Like the Huns, these last were of Tartar stock, and thus introduced that Eastern element in Austrian history which to this day has kept a very certain influence in its affairs. The Avars were bold enough to reach Italy ; they were long settled in Dalmatia ; and it was not until Charlemagne's time that they were more or less completely driven out of these European lands, chiefly by the action of the Slavic Moravians. It was partly as a barrier against these retreating Avars, as well as to resist the Slavs, that Charlemagne decided to found the Mark of Austria.

It had scarcely begun its existence when it was almost swept away by the invasions of the Magyars, the race that we now know as Hungarians. They began to arrive during the ninth century, and by the beginning of the tenth century they were threatening to push the Franks entirely out of these parts. However, the Emperor Otto the Great, one of the greatest chiefs of the Germanic-Roman Empire, defeated the Magyars in 955, and re-established the Mark, which was never again really conquered by Eastern invaders, except once, by the Magyars. Then the history of Austria flows continuously from this date. Otto gave it to the house of Babenburg, which held it until that family became extinct. The last survivor, be it noted, died in battle against the Magyars

in 1246 ; for this race had not been driven out like the earlier Huns and Avars. It had established itself as the permanent factor in Austrian affairs, which it remains to-day.

Who exactly these Magyars were is still an unsettled problem in ethnology. They came from the same direction as the earlier Huns and Avars, and eventually settled down in the same plain of the Danube which had been the chief seat of the Hun and Avar power in Europe ; and it is probable that they have absorbed some of the blood of these earlier inhabitants. When they first arrived on the Danube, the Magyars were accompanied by Hunagars and Turki tribes ; so we cannot with certainty do much more than regard the Hungarian nation as of a stock that came from that Asian district whence also sprang the Finnish races that went into the north of Europe. The main point that concerns us is that we are dealing with a race which is very distinct from those we describe by the general term European. It is the establishment of the first serious racial complications of Austrian history. Whoever they are, the Hungarian Magyars are a great people of many charms ; and their destiny must be the concern of everyone who is interested in the preservation of the higher civilisations. Their main characteristics will be noted after the general history of the country has been sketched.

During the Babenburg period Austria had come to be a powerful state of the Germanic Empire ; its towns had grown wealthy by the trade that the Danube bore to and from the east ; and wealthy merchants made a rich Duke, as the ruler of Austria was entitled after 1156. Only the King of Bohemia and the Margrave of Branden-

burg were fit to compare with the Duke of Austria amongst the princes of the Empire. For a few years after 1260, Ottokar, the King of Bohemia, came into possession of Austria also ; but he was slain at the battle of the Marchfield in 1272 ; and the Hapsburg emperor of that time seized the Austrian duchy for his own family. Until this day the same family of Hapsburgs holds the throne, and during the interval its dominions grew by a gradual process, chiefly by marriage, until it became, for a time, the most powerful dynasty in Europe. From the beginning of the fifteenth century the dignity of the Imperial crown was acknowledged to be the hereditary right of the Hapsburgs. The marriage between Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy led to the addition of the Netherlands ; and the marriage of their son Philip to Joan of Spain added the Spanish dominions also. But that is beyond our present purpose, which is to trace the history of Austria as it concerns the lands within the existing boundary.

It is Turkey that has always been the important external factor in Austria's evolution. Even after the Hapsburgs had become hereditary emperors and successors to their Roman predecessors, it was really their functions as lords of the defensive Mark that still remained their chief work in the world. In the year 1453 the Turks had captured Constantinople, which till then had stood as the legitimate descendant of that older empire. When Constantinople fell Austria might well feel that it had a better claim than ever to represent Europe ; and whatever might be the justice of this theory, it was an urgent fact that Austria was the first great Power to stand across the Turks' path into Europe. As

early as the middle of the thirteenth century Hungary had been swept by Mongols, which had led to the planting of Saxon colonists, as defenders along the border. The descendants of these colonists are there to this day as a clearly defined race, still holding itself aloof from its neighbours. It was under Soliman the Great that the Turks crushed the Hungarian army at the famous battle of Mohacs, 1526. The King of Hungary fell in the field, and his brother-in-law, the Archduke of Austria, claimed the kingdom of Hungary and also Bohemia, which at that time were both united under the same Polish dynasty. Bohemia consented; but the Hungarians refused to surrender their independence, and even called their late enemy Soliman to their aid. He came, and marched on Vienna, which successfully withstood the great siege of 1529. It was fulfilling its duty as the Mark.

The Turks being driven back, the Austrian monarch obtained his desire; and most of Hungary came under the control of the Hapsburgs. It was the beginning of the formal absorption of the Magyars in the Teutonic dominions of Austria. However, it was not until Vienna had stood another great siege by the Turks, in 1683, that those latter were finally driven out of the Hungarian kingdom, where they had exercised a suzerainty over the southern parts ever since the battle of Mohacs. There is one point that it is interesting to recall about this second great siege of 1683: the Austrians were only saved by the aid of the Slav kingdom of Poland, whose king, John Sobieski, rushed to their assistance.

We have seen how Austria obtained the controlling power over the Slav Bohemia and a part of Magyar

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Hungary ; and now, after the Turks' final defeat, the Sultans gave up Buda, where they had been more or less the masters for one hundred and fifty years ; and also the provinces of Transylvania and Croatia ; all of which fell to the Hapsburgs. In short, Austria, by the year 1700, had practically the same boundaries as it had when the War of 1914 began. It was a strange jumble of provinces ruled by an alien race at Vienna ; and that alien race was, as one might expect, a Teutonic race. It is usually only the Teuton who has enough bad taste to want to rule anybody ! There is a certain amount of Teuton blood in both the English and French. But not enough to make them rule badly, shall we say ?

The psychological difference between the Teutonic rule of Austria and the Teutonic rule of Prussia is the history of the difference between the two allied countries. The factors of the problem were very different ; and it is these distinctions that we must endeavour to understand. The main points to notice are, first, that the Teutons of Austria are very largely Celts, to talk in an Irish manner ; secondly, these Teutonic Celts had not fellow-Teutons as the mass of their subjects—which was the case in the Prussian problem—but, instead, a vast majority of alien Slavs and Magyars and other very distant human races. To-day Austria-Hungary has a population of about 54,000,000. Of these only about 12,000,000 are Germans. No less than 30,000,000 are Slavs of various branches ; 8,000,000 are Magyars, while there are 3,000,000 Roumanians, who are very largely of Italian blood ; besides 1,000,000 Italians, who are still nearer in relationship to their mother race.

The Teutons in Austria-Hungary are, at the best,

little more than a garrison in a foreign land. But in using that military term one must distinguish it very carefully from the sense which it might acquire in a Prussian use of the term. Take it all in all, the government of the Hapsburgs in Vienna has been, if not a success, at least a very tolerable failure. It has made many blunders; it has had periods of stupid reaction below the standards of the age. But it has never continuously outraged the progress of civilisation by driving dead against the stream of decent human endeavour and advance.

The first great sovereign of Austria-Hungary, after it had spread out to its full limits, was Maria Theresa, who came to the throne at almost the same moment that Frederick the Great succeeded to the throne of Prussia. Her reign of forty years, from 1740, illustrates many vital facts in the character of the Austrian rule. To begin with, it is significant that this great ruler was a woman. A queen would seem an impossibility in Prussian history; for, being only a half-civilised race, the Prussian classes a woman in a lower order of existence than a man. Naturally, a race that believed that the greatest man is he who can kill most people in the field of battle, cannot attach the same importance to a woman. Turning to Austria-Hungary, one finds that never did its peoples respect and love a sovereign more than they respected and loved Maria-Theresa. In the man-ridden Teuton world of the German Empire it had seemed rather improbable, when the male Hapsburg line died out with Charles VI. in 1740, that his daughter would ever be acknowledged as his successor. Her subjects showed their standard of civilisation by defending her against

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such comparative barbarism as Frederick the Great of Prussia ; who at once invaded her dominions without a moment's warning of war. It was like a hog charging into a boudoir. It is worth recalling that Maria Theresa's contemporary, Catherine the Great of Russia, was a sign that the Slavs were also civilised enough to recognise a woman for one of their greatest monarchs. But, as a matter of fact, Russia was ruled by able women for most of the eighteenth century.

It is interesting to remember that it was the Magyars of Hungary, not the Teuton subjects, who were the first to come to Maria Theresa's assistance. The peoples of Austria-Hungary certainly got the reward of their good sense ; for Maria Theresa made one of the best monarchs that her nation has ever possessed, so far as good intentions and earnest endeavours go, at all events. She realised the vast difficulties of her strangely confused realm, and made a great effort to pull its scattered races together. Her intentions were sometimes better than her methods. Thus she thought that, if her peoples could only be made to speak one language, all would begin to go more smoothly. To a certain extent she succeeded ; for she had delightful tact and judgment. When the Prussians want to spread their official language they employ schoolmasters to flog their pupils until they learn the new tongue. Prussians still flog Polish children if they refuse to pray in German.

But it was Maria Theresa's son, Joseph II., who had a perfect mania for reform. His mother had made many attempts to improve the welfare of her people. The son had hopes that he could clear up the muddle of his kingdom as a muscular housemaid sweeps out a dirty

house. He had a good deal of the mind of Peter the Great, though a hundred times more taste. He thought that the main fault of Austria was that it was too mediæval. He spun very fine-sounding phrases: "Prejudices, fanaticism, party spirit, must disappear, and all my subjects must return to the exercise of their national rights." He talked rather after the manner of Catherine of Russia and her French philosopher friends.

Unfortunately, Joseph thought that deep-rooted reforms could be planted by his own will: "An empire where I am in command must be ruled by my principles." So he tried to sweep away all national differences by a decree of state. He divided up his kingdom into departments, without regard to their desires. He refused to see, for example, such a weighty fact as the kingdom of Bohemia or the kingdom of Hungary, and would not take the coronation oaths in their national Diets. It was like an ostrich burying its head in the sand. He wanted all his subjects to have the same laws, the same religion; they were to live up to the standard of Joseph. It was really quite a good standard; for he abolished serfdom and torture and capital punishment; he gave freedom to the press, even to the length of libels against himself. By a strange mental process he thought he could get a standardised religion by closing monasteries and selling their vessels and shrines and books to the Jews by the pound.

In short, with the best intentions in the world, he tried to tear the nations of Austria-Hungary up by the roots, and transplant them as one would rearrange a garden. The plants absolutely refused to grow in their new soils. And Joseph II. showed what a really great reformer he was by abolishing many of his own pet remedies. The

document wherein he announced this reversal to his people is one of the most astounding acknowledgments that a ruler ever made: "We had made some changes in the government, through zeal for the public welfare, with the sole hope that you would take pleasure in them when you had tried them. Now we are convinced that you prefer the ancient ways of government, and that they are necessary for your happiness."

That is a fact which to a large degree holds good to this day. Austria-Hungary still refuses to be reduced to the standard pattern of the more commercialised nations of the world. It is still of the "old world" rather than the new. Unlike its Prussian brother, it has not yet plunged into the whirlpool of the machinery age of bureaucrats and factory owners. These have come, of course; but they are not yet supreme in the states, as they are in Prussia. The bureaucracy of Teuton rule has certainly been tried in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. It has almost failed to take root. The subjects, not being Prussians, have simply refused to be turned into parts of a State machine. While, on the other hand, the ruling classes, not being pure Teutons, have not persistently made themselves into bullies. After the fall of the Napoleonic Empire, and the resettlement of Europe at the Congress of Vienna, Metternich deluded himself into the belief that he was building up a strong bureaucratic government in the Austrian dominions.

But Metternich, who by some mysterious process got the reputation of being the first statesman of his age, probably suffered under more delusions than anyone else in Europe. He lived at a time when nobody knew how

long it would be before the French revolutionary opinions might again break through the dam built at the Vienna Congress. If anyone suggested the change of a comma in the political constitutions of the Middle Ages, Metternich and his like imagined they heard the guillotine knife rising for another crop of victims. He had not sufficient intellect to think of any way of meeting discontent except by police spies and prison cells. The policeman has always been the last refuge of the fool.

Metternich could no more handle the chaotic problems of Austrian government than a lame man could manage a herd of young colts in the New Forest. He thought that charming manners were a substitute for high thinking. He pirouetted through diplomacy as a graceful dancer gets through a fashionable ball. He was all airs and graces. He could have made a name nowhere else than in diplomatic council chambers and on the melodramatic stage. He was really a very good fellow ; he only lacked brains. He hypnotised himself into the belief that he had mastered the revolutionary movement of Europe. He wrote to his wife in 1818 : " I have become a species of moral power in Germany and perhaps even in Europe." The events proved that Metternich was mostly an empty mask. This "*système de Metternich*," which seemed so terrifying, simply did not work. At the first blast of the Revolution of 1848 Metternich had to fly. All his machinery of policemen could not save him. But the amusing thing is that this master of secret information did not believe there was any rising until the mob was actually hammering at his own bureau door.

The great Metternich had turned out a delusion. Castle-reagh, the English Foreign Minister, had summed up

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Austria and its chief minister very shrewdly many years before : " Austria both in army and government is a timid power. Her minister is constitutionally temporising—he is charged with more faults than belong to him, but he has his full share." His system was there, but it was almost a skeleton : the custom-house officers allowed foreign goods to come in without taxing them ; the libraries issued censored volumes by putting round them the wrappers of a cookery guide or the covers of a prayer-book. Indeed the citizens of Vienna made a point of only reading those books which had received the strong recommendation of the censor ! The head constable of Prague, when he was told to stamp out the free licence of balls during Lent, merely looked the other way when he saw the dancers. In fact the Celtic Teutons were too civilised to obey the instructions of an alien Prussianism. It is noteworthy that it was the energy of the Hungarian revolutionaries that gave the Viennese the courage to overthrow Metternich in 1848. The first thing they did was to accept a programme which was directly based on a great speech of the Hungarian leader, Kossuth. It is one more instance of the perpetual fact that revolution is so often a revolt of another race against something Teutonic.

The revolutionary movement of 1848 failed in Austria-Hungary, not because the bureaucratic government was strong, but because the people were so divided ; and, perhaps, also because they were wise enough to suspect that much of the so-called " reform " would only put the new plutocratic traders in the place of the less objectionable aristocrats. The clash of the nations saved the Teutonic government at Vienna a little longer. Never-

theless, the Viennese could turn out a far more effective revolution than the sheep of Berlin could manage to mount. Twice the Emperor of Austria had to fly from his capital during this revolt. One cannot recall any Prussian king who ever had to fly anywhere. And the place whither the Emperor fled was to Olmütz, where he was surrounded by Slav subjects; and whither he was soon followed by the Slav majority that had captured the revolutionary parliament elected by the universal suffrage which the rebels had demanded. These Slavs, after the ruthless crushing of the Bohemian Czechs and their parliament at Prague, saw that the Viennese revolution was mainly an attempt of the Germans to govern the whole empire through a centralised assembly. So the Slavs clung to the Emperor's government as the best way of protecting themselves from their German and Hungarian enemies.

It was the strength of Hungary that kept the revolutionary forces alive. When the (still reigning) Emperor Francis Joseph came to the throne in 1848, in the midst of the tumult, he determined to crush the Hungarian Magyars, thus ridding himself of his most dangerous foe. Whereupon burst forth the great Hungarian rebellion, which was only crushed by the aid of the Slavs, and—still more significantly—by the assistance of 200,000 Russian troops who were sent by the Tsar Nicholas to help his brother monarch in revolutionary distress. Had it not been for that Russian army the Magyars would have crushed the Teutonic Hapsburgs. In other words, the German monarchy and its bureaucracy were too weak to maintain their position unaided. Comparing that with the way in which Prussia has always ruled her subject

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peoples, we get a very good test of the respective strength of the central Prussian and Austrian ruling autocracy. Put in another and more illuminating way, we can say that Austria has never been so grasping a tyrant as Prussia. If it has tried to be a despot, all one can say is that it has not succeeded ; in other words, the Austrians are not so efficient in the arts of bureaucracy as the Prussians.

It has, in short, been little more than a matter of luck whether the German Hapsburgs ruled in Vienna at all. It might easily have happened that the Emperor of Austria should be a Magyar. As late as the second half of the fifteenth century Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, had captured Bohemia and Moravia, and been crowned king of both those nations. He reconquered the southern Hungarian provinces which had been seized by the Turks ; and finally, by 1485, he had captured Vienna itself, and made it his capital. He had for the moment practically supplanted the German Hapsburgs. If he had been followed by lawful successors there might now be no Teuton dominance either in Vienna or Berlin. The interesting point is when we realise that a Hungarian rule would probably have been a more civilising power than the Teutonic government.

The Magyar race is one of the most attractive products of humanity that the world has yet seen. Compared with the ponderous German, the Magyar is a creature of joy and light. Still unsoiled by industrialism and coal smoke, the life on the great Hungarian plain is one of the surviving protests against the vulgarity of the bank managers' civilisation of the new Western Europe. The Magyar noble is a generous, graceful gentleman, who

treats his peasantry with respect and human deference. Even after the Magyar lords had been treated with unrecordable ferocity by the revolting Wallachs during the rebellion of 1848, they still continue to treat that alien peasantry with tolerable kindness. As for the true Magyar peasant, he is one of those cultured beings who prefer to give their hours to music and dancing rather than to building factories for Jewish capitalists or German traders. The Hungarian is a democrat at heart, because he is too well disposed and good natured to be desirous of making money at somebody else's expense. This Matthias Corvinus, who almost made his race dominant in the Austrian Empire, was an example of his stock. He was a great soldier, no doubt; but he was also a man of culture; he aided the Arts and Sciences. So just was he to the common people that when he died he left behind him the Hungarian proverb: "King Matthias is dead; there is no more justice."

Like his Slav neighbours, as we shall see in a few minutes, the Magyar is really a protest against that system of civilisation which is expressed by the German commercial traveller. At its root, the present Teutonic dominance in Austria-Hungary depends on the German commercial system, in close alliance with the Jews. If anyone could prove that the Germans are the lost Jewish tribes, there would be every inducement to believe in the theory. For the German trader and manufacturer seems to have many of those bourgeois, anti-social tendencies that are so typical of the Jew middleman. German and Jew seem in their element when they are in power over other people who are working to make profits for them. The years during which Hungary

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lay crushed after the rebellion of 1848 were the years when the German middle-class traders were seizing the power in the Viennese Government. The so-called democratic movement of 1859 was an attempt to put power into the hands of a centralised bureaucracy—representing the middle-class German.

It was the non-German elements of the empire that refused to look at such a constitution. The Magyar in 1867, when the Vienna Government was weak after the war with Prussia, obtained an independent constitution; and henceforth there were two monarchies in the empire, on theoretically equal terms; the kingdom of Austria, and the kingdom of Hungary, united only by the same monarch. The kingdom of Hungary is a protest against much more than Teutonic conquest. It is a protest of an older civilisation against the new race of bankers and commercial travellers "on the make." It is a vulgar phrase—but so is the trade. The Jewish plutocrat and the Jew sweater are nowhere more dangerous to civilisation than in Austria-Hungary. Anti-Semitism gets a new meaning when one sees the utter degradation that follows the arrival of the Jew trader and middleman in a land where the working class is not yet organised for modern economic defence. The Jewish usurer has quite ruined what little dregs of prosperity the Polish nobles had left to the Galician peasants. The same commercial vampire follows the unhappy man when he flies to the industrial towns, where he falls into a sweating den usually conducted by a Jew or a German. It is almost amusing to watch the haughty aristocrats of Vienna trying to stand against the Jewish plutocrats who are gradually hemming them in by sheer weight of

banking accounts. The Emperor, for one of his ancient titles, has the official name, "the King of Palestine." He is reported to have said, with a remarkably successful combination of wit and philosophy, that one day it will be truer to call him "The King of the Jews."

Under such circumstances it is not surprising to find that there is a certain alliance between the Church and the democracy which does not exist in all other European nations. When the practically universal suffrage constitution of 1907 came into force, the two parties which jumped into the first places in Parliament were the Christian Socialists, with ninety-six members, and the Social Democrats, with eighty-seven seats, while the Pan-German Party sank from fifteen to three members. Beneath all the political and racial rivalry in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire there is this dominant fact, that the Teutonic-Jewish elements are capitalists and commercial, while against them is the older-world life of the Magyar freemen and the Slav communists. Austria-Hungary is the meeting-ground of the East and the West, as we have already noted. In another sense, it is the meeting-ground where the mediæval system is still fighting for its life against the modern industrialism.

So far we have written mainly of the Magyars as the chief opponents of the Teutonic rule in Austria. But there is another element of opposition which can best be realised if we approach it in its external form, in the shape of Serbia. It will then be easier to understand the meaning of the 30,000,000 Slavs who live within the empire.

SERVIA

When the Russian Slavs came to the assistance of the Servians in this Great War of 1914, they were engaged in a concern of the most intimate domestic nature. The people of Servia are as much the brothers and sisters of the Russians as the Canadians and Australians are the brothers and sisters of Englishmen. The Servians are a colonising branch of the Russian race. They are pure Slavs who left their Carpathian and West Russian homes somewhere about the middle of the sixth century, crossed the Danube, and settled around the districts where they are to-day. After a wildly exciting history, of which it will be necessary to consider the chief events, the Servians still remain a pure Slav race, which can no more be considered apart from Russia than the history of an arm could be considered apart from its owner's head. Indeed in many ways one might almost argue that Servians are more purely Slav than those who stayed at home in Russia. For the Servian Slavs escaped the conquest by the Scandinavian Teutons, who did not arrive in Russia until after the Servians had left for the Balkans. The Servians, of course, as we shall see, were under Turkish rule for centuries, much as their Russian relations were under Tartar rule; but in neither case did that suzerainty eat very deeply into the national Slav life. As a matter of fact, the Mongolian and the Turk both have a gentlemanly way of not intruding into other people's private affairs more than is absolutely necessary during the process of collecting tribute—when they are ruthless. This may not be the general conception of

the Turk—but, then, general conceptions are continually in the habit of ignoring facts.

During the early years in their new home, the Servians were a confederation of tribes, each under his chief, who more or less acknowledged the head chieftainship of a president; who, in turn, recognised the suzerainty of the Byzantine emperors at Constantinople. In the year 1185 one of these head lords, Stephan, began extending the boundary of the district that acknowledged his rule. It was then that both Bosnia and Novibazar and Nish became Servian lands. Stephan went so far as to call himself King of Servia; his son married a daughter of the Greek Emperor, and the mighty Frederick Barbarossa visited him in Belgrade. For in those days Servia was not a small state, but quite a large one. But it was only a beginning. The Emperor recognised Stephan's son as the independent King of Servia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and the adjoining districts. This Stephan and also his son were cultured and peaceful rulers, as became their Slavic race, patrons of education, founders of monasteries and other civilised institutions. The latter had the advantage of a French wife.

It seems quite possible that, had it not been for the intrusion of the warlike Turks into this neighbourhood, the Servians might have developed on these peaceful lines, and never displayed the martial qualities one now attaches to their name. But the Turks appeared at Constantinople; and it is quite impossible to live next to the Turks (or the Prussians) without continually being prepared for acts of warfare. However, even before they had to fight the Turks, the Servians had shown themselves capable soldiers when they resisted an attack

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from the Emperor Michael Paleologus at the end of the thirteenth century ; indeed they carried their arms to the shores of the Aegean. In other words, they almost solved the " Greater Serbia " problem at the first attempt. However, they were not ambitious, and allowed the Greek Emperor to make peace. Within a few years, 1303, the Servians sent an army into Asia Minor, to his assistance, to drive back the Turks. Their national struggle of centuries had begun. In twelve years they were again fighting the Turks, successfully, but this time it was much nearer home, in Thrace itself ; in other words, the Turks were advancing.

Stephan Dusan, who ascended the Servian throne in 1326, was the most powerful of its mediæval rulers. The Greek Empire was then tottering, and Dusan thought that he and Serbia might take the place of the Byzantines as the rulers of the East, and the bulwark against the oncoming Turks. By 1340 he had conquered as far as the Gulf of Corinth, and was almost at the gates of Adrianople ; while Bulgaria practically was at his orders. Louis of Hungary advanced against him ; but Stephan drove him back again over the River Save, and seized Belgrade and its district, which had previously been Hungarian land. He then regained Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had reasserted their independence. He was not merely a warrior ; for he drew up a new legal code, built schools and churches, suppressed brigands, sent judges on circuit, and generally made himself useful in national affairs. But his ambition was Constantinople ; and he advanced to seize it before the Turks established themselves there. He was on the outskirts of the great city when he suddenly died—as

likely as not poisoned by the Emperor. If so, it was only a few grains of poison that changed history. For it is possible that the vigorous Servian Slavs might have defended Constantinople, whereas the softer Greeks failed when they were attacked by the Turks.

Be that as it may, the Servians never entered Constantinople ; and by the year 1389, together with their Slav neighbours, they were crushed by the Mohammedan power at the famous battle of Kossovo. Until the year 1878, at the Congress of Berlin, when her independence was recognised, the overlordship of Turkey remained the chief factor in Servian history. Into the history of those five centuries it is unnecessary to go here. The overlordship varied much in its strength at different times. It was not until the period 1427-1440 that the Sultan's troops were able to enter the country ; and even then John Hunyady, ruler of Hungary, almost rescued Serbia from the Turks, at the close of that invasion. However, between 1459 and 1804 we may say that Turkish rule in Serbia was a hard fact. Not that it was much worse than the standard of Christian rule of its contemporaries. There was probably nothing so fiendishly tyrannical about the rule of the Mohammedan Sultan of Turkey as there was in the government of the Christian Hapsburgs when the Netherlands were under their rule. The Turk did not even interfere with his subjects' religion. Taxation was heavy, of course ; and there was a good deal of forced labour, and so on.

But the fact which concerns us is that, during all the years of this subjection, the Slav spirit was never broken by its rulers. They lost no opportunity of resisting. They helped their old national enemies, the Hungarians,

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to fight the Turks at the great battle of Mohacs in 1526 ; they helped the Austrians to save Vienna during the siege of 1683 ; and, when successful, immediately declared their intention of reasserting their Servian nationality. But, being Teutons, the rulers of Austria naturally crushed any such idea. One never heard of a German helping any nation to gain its freedom. Joseph II., the Emperor of Austria, in alliance with Russia, certainly helped the Servians to drive out the Turks in 1788. But he was an exceptional Teuton ; and anyhow his death, in 1790, together with the French Revolution, upset the Servian plan, and their country was restored to the mercy of the Turks. The Turks came back to find that the Slav spirit of independence was burning fiercer than ever.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Turkish governor of Servia was a charming man, and exceedingly popular with his Slav subjects. It is most instructive to observe how it happened that, during the mildest of the Turkish rule, the most successful of the revolts burst forth. The truth being that the Sultan's governor was behaving very well in Servia ; while the Turkish military class, the Janissaries, were, like most military classes, behaving like a pack of hounds. The Sultan ordered them out of Servia : they took up arms, and defied their own master. They massacred all the Servians they could catch, until the survivors banded themselves together under Karageorgevic, Black George, the son of a peasant, who had made a fortune (as fortunes go in rural countries) by growing pigs. He was never able to sign his name ; but he inspired the whole nation by driving the Turks out of Belgrade. To be more accurate,

the Servians killed in cold blood every Mohammedan they found in the city during two days' search. It was the revenge of a race for over four centuries of alien rule, Black George was the founder of the present ruling family of Servia.

But he could not yet stand against the whole power of Constantinople ; and he fled to Austria, which he had always looked to as his most effective support, while the lesser chiefs preferred Russia. Another successful dealer in pigs took Black George's place, one Milosh Obrenovic. He skilfully played with the Turks until he was ready to rise in revolt ; which he did so successfully that the Sultan granted Servia a large measure of independence and self-government ; while he himself was acknowledged by the other chiefs and ecclesiastics as Prince of Servia, in 1817. When his rival, Kara George, returned from exile, Milosh promptly had him murdered. Hence the feud between the two families which has proved a convenient excuse for the professional politicians of Servia to squabble about ever since.

But the Servians soon began to realise that Milosh was just as bad as the Turks ! He treated the people like serfs, and enclosed their commons, so that they could not feed as many pigs as he had himself. He was rapidly getting a monopoly of the pig trade. So the people broke out in discontent. Milosh was very clever ; instead of giving them reform on the commons and in the pig trade, he offered them a full-blown political constitution ! It said splendid things about the rights of man and all the other fine sentiments that had been discussed during the French Revolution—which were only of theoretical importance. It said nothing about the

pigs, which mattered a great deal. Then he calmly ignored the constitution (which really would not have done much good if he had observed it), and proceeded to corner the salt trade as well as the pigs. The Tsar of Russia urged Milosh to grant a real constitution; but England, for selfish reasons, preferred the commercial autocrat to remain in power. This was our first appearance in the affairs of Serbia; supporting a tyrannical ruler against the criticism of more democratic Russia.

However, Milosh Obrenovic found the opposition too strong; so he tried to palm off another constitution. It is the safe rule for all tyrants. If you want to do nothing—grant a political constitution. Obrenovic's new plan was to have a council of seventeen Ministers of State; while he himself abdicated. The new idea was tried until the people said: "In the time of Milosh we only had one ditch to fill with money, but now we must fill seventeen, one for each of the council." So they demanded the recall of Milosh. His son came instead; but soon caused national discontent by spending so much money on education—which the peasants said was one of these new-fangled German ideas! So they revolted. Obrenovic retired to Austria; and Alexander, the son of Karageorgevic, was chosen as king in 1842. He was a pleasant, unassuming person; and did a lot of useful work in the way of road-making and economic reforms. He appears to have been a democrat; and it was by no means a people's rising that drove him out in 1858, and restored Milosh, whose family held the throne until Alexander Obrenovic and his wife, Queen Draga, were murdered in 1903; when Peter Karageorgevic ascended the throne after an exile of forty-five

years. Between these dates there were other family murders, which it is not the time to detail here.

Now there are impetuous people who will conclude that this nation, which indulges in assassinations and blood-shedding revolts at every opportunity, is a disreputable race. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Servians are a charming people, whose chief hobbies are poetry and hospitality; whose simplest peasants have the bearing of ladies and gentlemen. The Servian Slavs, like their brothers in Russia, are a communistically inclined race who object to being interfered with by inefficient politicians and governors. They have continually persisted in resisting any rule which intrudes on their liberty. Being one of the old-world races, which have not seen the advantage of spending their lives in making profits for manufacturers and bankers, they are still in the main an agricultural people; and they have not yet found any necessity for that "advanced" political and constitutional reform which usually goes with a large stock exchange and an extensive system of Poor Law relief. Serbia is one of those "uncivilised" countries which have practically neither paupers nor lunatics.

The warlike spirit of the Slav, take it all in all, is not the desire to conquer others. It is rather the determination to resist conquest. During the time of that war with Turkey which ended in the Treaty of Berlin, 1878, the cry of the "Greater Serbia" certainly was heard; but when analysed it will be seen that its desire to unite into one nation all the Slav peoples of their neighbourhood is a very different thing to wanting to conquer other races. The Servians' unanswerable excuse for de-

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siring to capture Bosnia and Herzegovina is that the Slav races of those Austrian provinces wish to be conquered. That strange form of vitality which we call "nationalism" and "patriotism" has many unsatisfactory features; but at root it is a manifestation of the haughty refusal to allow oneself to be domineered by somebody else. The Slavs are a high-spirited people who would prefer to remain gentlemen and poets: they have been compelled to become good fighters, because other people, such as Turks and Teutons (and sometimes even their own rulers), have tried to play the tyrant. Unlike the sheep of Prussia, the Slavic Servian puts his personal dignity before his respect for his master.

It is not difficult to realise the effect that such a race as the Servians, living on the borders of the Austrian Empire, must have on their 30,000,000 brother Slavs within that empire. It is the effect that a firework display would have at the door of a gunpowder magazine. Any moment a spark may blow the place to the sky. The little kingdom of Serbia at its door is more representative of the vast majority of the Austrian subjects than their own Teutonic government at Vienna. It is not that this government has been particularly tyrannical to its Slavs. For example, the Austrian Poles have been better treated than their unhappy brothers who fell, at the Partition, into the hands of the Prussians. Galicia has not been impoverished by the Austrians, but by the Jews. As we have seen, it was the Slavs who saved their emperor from the revolutionary Hungarianism and the Teutonic middle-class politicians at the time of the revolts of 1848. But put it how one will, the vast Slav majority in the Austrian Empire is ruled by

an alien race which is at the other pole of sociological organisation.

The Teuton is essentially an autocrat, a capitalist and a bureaucrat. The Slav is fundamentally a democrat, a handicraftsman and agriculturalist, and a communist. In Austria there are to be found "house communities" of two hundred or more persons who live together as members of the same family, and whose ancestors have lived like that before them for generations. As in Russia, the Austrian Slav instinctively bases his industry on the principle of communistic co-operation, and dreads the modern individualism of the capitalist system.

But, turning now to consider Austria as a whole, as compared with Germany, we see that while modern Germany is the last word in the organisation by great capitalists and bureaucrats, Austria, except for the districts captured by the Teutons and the Jews, is still a land where the mediæval craftsman would not be altogether amazed if he returned to-day. In Austria the bureaucrats of Vienna have, like the bureaucrats of Petrograd, only scratched the surface of the national life. In Prussia they have eaten to the bone.

In only the most superficial manner is Austria bound up with the fortunes of Prussian Germany. The publication of the recent diplomacy which led up to this Great War of 1914 has conclusively revealed to us that Austria has been used merely as the cat's-paw of the Prussian monarchy, which has been for generations its historical foe and rival. The only possible explanation of the elaborate schemes of Germany in regard to the railways of Asia Minor involves the further assumption that

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sooner or later it was the intention of the Prussian monarchy to absorb the intervening empire of Austria, with the necessary Balkan connection beyond its present boundaries. Austria was to remain the ally of Germany only until it was convenient to make the Austrians and Hungarians and Slavs its subjects. The Pan-Germans have not concealed their intentions; Trieste to them is "the Hamburg of South Germany," and the German Empire is its "Heir Apparent." The students of Innsbruck sing the "Wacht am Rhein" instead of their own national anthem. Bismarck broke the supremacy of Austria in 1866. It is fairly clear that the Imperialists of Potsdam had every intention of taking the next step by attacking their humbled enemy to more drastic purpose when the times were ripe. There is evidence that their plans were hastened by the signs that the Austrian Teutons, with the higher civilisation that comes from their Celtic infusion, might give the better and freer government to their Slav subjects, which would lead to a more united and stronger Austrian Empire. Whether this would have satisfied the Slavs might have been another matter. But the possible future of Austria-Hungary is a fitter subject for the concluding chapter. We have here merely stated the historical factors.

VII: GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

To seek for general conclusions in the Great War of 1914 is somewhat like searching for architectural proportions in the debris of an earthquake. But one thing at least does emerge from the ruins. The civilised world seems united in the desire to crush Prussian militarism out of life. It is not merely the nations that are already fighting which desire the end of hooligan Germany. There is probably no race in the world that has so much hatred for the Teutons as the Italians. There was an old popular couplet sung in Italy which ran :

"Italy's three plagues that grieve her
Are friars and Germans and fever."

The history of the salvation of Italy from tyranny is the history of the driving out of the Teutonic-Austrian rule. As we have already noted, the very neutrality of Italy, in defiance of the theoretical political bonds of the Triple Alliance, is itself the expression of the Latin spirit in revolt against the bullying of the Teuton. It is in Italy that we find the root of the Latin spirit. It was the republic of Rome that established that tradition of Latin democracy in Europe which has never died. It was in Celtic France that the seed of that Latin spirit made its most vigorous growth beyond the parent land. But it would be ungracious to decide whether Italy or France has done most in the cause of human freedom.

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Whether it has succeeded or not in making out its case, the aim of this book has been to suggest that the Great War of 1914 is only a new phase of that attempt of the Teutons to invade the Latin Empire, which they began in the early centuries of the Christian era. Some hurried journalists, in search of a lurid phrase, have written of the "march of the Huns" on Belgium and France. There is really no need for any such invention. For one thing, it is unfair to the Huns; and, again, it is unnecessary to find any word which contains more attacks on human dignity than are summed up in the word "Prussian."

The Prussian mind—one cannot apply the word "spirit" to anything so gross and ponderous—is almost the only part of human life which has deliberately set itself to the work of enslavement of its fellow-beings. The Prussian is the man who has turned government from a legitimate profession to a criminal trade which is an outrage on humanity. The Prussian has spent hundreds of years in evolving a method by which human beings can be turned from free men into machines. The essence of the Prussian mind is that it no longer considers the individual. It only thinks in terms of nations—and, incidentally, of only one nation. It attaches no more personality to a citizen in a state than an engineer attaches to a crank in a locomotive. The Prussian system of government is not, strictly speaking, a human system at all. It is more in the nature of mechanical science. It has lost sight of any notion that the perfection and happiness of the individual are the chief end of human endeavour. The Prussian mind only thinks in terms of crowds, which it wishes to organise

into a collective mass called the State. The essence of Prussianism is the destruction of the individual, and the glorification of the State. The more delicate problems of the individual are crudely ignored. It is a craving for something large, and overcrowded with people. It is the ideal of land speculators and actor managers; the desire for much land and a full house. The Prussian appears to be the only governor who has deliberately turned statesmanship into a branch of mechanics.

Now there is a popular notion—especially amongst the Germans themselves—that they are a nation of warriors. It is certainly what one might expect of a people that relies on force. But the astonishing thing is that nothing could be further from the truth. The Germans are not a nation of warriors. They are a herd of sheep. It will be indignantly answered that already this war has demonstrated the heroic quality of the Teutonic courage. But that does not contradict the statement just made. Certainly the Germans have gone to the slaughter of this Great War without a moment's hesitation. Is that not one of the most marked qualities of the sheep? "As a sheep before his shearers is dumb." We are beginning to realise that the Teutons are the race that bends to the tyrant's whip more patiently than any people in history. The Teuton is the only white race that has the essential qualities of the slave mind.

But the lamblike obedience of the German soldier has not been implanted in his nature without the direst results to his whole constitution. The Prussian mind has not merely made the German soldier a lamb in the hands of his military shearers. It has beaten out every faculty of freedom or initiative from every corner of his

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soul. The triumph of Prussianism is that it has made a whole nation fit for nothing else than to obey its rulers. The man who can only obey has lost the primary elements of his manhood.

This theory will bear the most searching analysis of the facts of Prussian history. At the present day the whole of German society is a persistent proof of its truthfulness. Take the case of the loudly proclaimed system of German education, in all its departments, from the elementary school to the university. The world, a few years ago, was talking much of the value of this system, and of the urgent necessity for copying the German plan if we hoped to compete with this rising nation. Now we are realising that the German system of education will be the ruin of Germany without any assistance from foreign foes. There was a time when Europe trembled at the thought of the Black Death. To-day it has more reason to be panic-stricken lest it be contaminated by the spread of the German schoolmaster. From his elementary schooldays the German child is sucked dry of every symptom of independent will. He is carefully moulded as one little wheel which will one day be fitted into the State machine. The statistics show that seventy per cent. of the children leave their schools with short sight, so slavishly are they driven to their books. It is the modern form of flogging recruits with the sergeant's cane. It is one more conquest of the Prussian ruler. Once on a time he was content to rule in his army; now he has brought his sergeant's cane system into the schools. It would cause anyone, except a Prussian bureaucrat, to pause when he saw that he had made child suicide a weekly occurrence in German life—and the

reason is usually because they have failed to pass some school examination. Surely Prussian bureaucracy can have no greater triumph of tyranny than that. There are many cases of child insanity in Russia, undoubtedly; but there it is interesting to note that the victim adopts the more logical course of shooting the schoolmaster!

But the annihilation of individualism does not stop there, though by the time a German citizen has gone through the bureaucratic mills of the school and the army there is not much danger of his moving a step in any direction without the orders of a superior. That is the final result of Prussianism—to await the expression of the superior will. Then follows the industrial system of Germany, the final word in modern capitalist machinery, as the funeral knell to any hope of liberty in that country. For industry, like the schools and the army, is run on a “system” wherein each does his little fragment of the work, and concerns himself as little as possible with the rest. Of course that is the mark of all specialised machine industry; but Germany is the only nation which positively enjoys specialisation, and the drudgery that goes with it. It was this Prussian-bred habit that made it possible for Germany to create a modern industrial system in a miraculously short time after the war of 1870. Those who think that the latest piece of machinery and the latest commercial organisation are the final climax of civilisation will, of course, write down this lightning change from feudalism to commercialism as a German virtue. It is one of the chief points of this book that the Latin spirit and the Slav spirit have never succumbed to the blight of modern commercialism, while Germany has become its very symbol. On a broad view, this Great

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War is a struggle of the new commercialism with the older spirit that is symbolised by the handicrafts and agriculture.

Of course there is the fact that commercial Britain is on the Latin side, while old-world Austria-Hungary is on the Teutonic side. But the position of Britain in this war is not a matter of racial principle, as it is in the case of France and Russia. We are fighting not so much in maintenance of a peculiar system of civilisation, but mainly because there is a gang of house-breakers endeavouring to enter our premises; and for mere personal convenience we must keep them out. The best of the nation rejoices that it so happens that we are fighting also in defence of outraged Belgium, and for the salvation of the Latin spirit and the Slav mysticism and communism. It would be rather a hopeless task to argue that there is a "British spirit" at stake of the same importance to civilisation as the Latin spirit. We must only congratulate ourselves that we have been so happy in having to defend something that is better than we possess ourselves. Nevertheless the struggle of this Great War has called forth national qualities which have made many of the most cynical of us wonder whether there is not a British spirit after all. The dignified eloquence of Mr Asquith, the straightforward and convincing diplomacy of Sir Edward Grey, and the bubbling energy of Mr Winston Churchill have been the outward signs of greater national health than many expected. Beside the blatant vulgarity of the Boer War jingoism, this War of 1914 is a religious crusade. There is at least one fact that we British can throw in the teeth of our Prussian enemies with haughty pride. We have given our colonies

practical independence ; even the Boers of South Africa are already a self-governing race. With the exception of a mere splutter in the provinces of the Transvaal and the Orange State the Empire has come to our aid of its own free will. And the races of India are already dying beside us on our battlefields. The loyalty of the Indians is the highest praise that the British Empire has ever been offered. It means that one of the oldest civilisations in the world is on our side. It also means that at least one race of empire-builders and conquerors has won the loyalty of its peoples. The Prussians could not win the loyalty of a few square miles of Alsace.

This Great War of 1914 is a traders' war ; it is a capitalists' war, a bankers' war ; above all, an armament-manufacturers' war. It would never have happened if a gang of financiers and manufacturers had not formed an unholy alliance with the German army. Perhaps the most immediate cause of the war was that the Russians refused to renew the hopelessly one-sided tariff which had been wrung out of them as the price of German neutrality during the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Together, these commercial travellers and these uneducated Prussian junkers worked out a plan of plunder that would have been more suitable in the days of the Barbary pirates. Had there not been a firm of Krupp, that mainly exists on the profits made from the sale of implements of human torture, even the hysterical vanity of the German Emperor would have burned itself out in some comparatively harmless form of insanity. This strange alliance between the Blood of the Junker and the Iron of Krupp was a strong combination. But even they would have failed in such a gigantic conspiracy to fool

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a nation into doing their devilish work, had it not been for one important fact. The people whom they had to fool were Prussianised Germans.

A nation that has been spoon-fed, mentally and physically flogged for generations, is not likely to show much intelligence or spirit. The Germans obeyed the orders of Krupp and Kaiser without a murmur. Germany adores anything in the shape of an order from a superior. Servility is bred in its bones. It is not a very strange thing that men like Bernhardi and Bloem should have written the books they did: there are hundreds of men of that sort in the asylums of Europe, and there are always a lot who escape certification by the doctors. The astounding thing is that Germany listened to such insanity. These books were the measure of the Prussian mind and the German nation. It was not very important to know that two or three Prussian soldiers and professors were mad. It was critical news to know that a whole nation was ready to believe madmen.

No one can deny that there is enough militarism and commercialism and to spare in every one of the many nations that are fighting to-day. But in all except Germany there are the elements of revolt against these two influences. In Germany, the revolutionary Social Democrats have been drilled into obedience almost as successfully as the regular army. There are black sheep in every fold—thanks be to the gods—but, take it all in all, the average German reminds one of a little lamb with a blue ribbon round its neck. Germany has been fooled into enthusiasm over this war because it is the only nation in the world that has reduced to an exact

science the gentle, childish art of "Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what mother will give you." The other peoples of this earth give up that game during their maturer years. The Prussian mind is eternally childish: it is always in swaddling clothes. Germany is a nation of children, ruled by their parents, one of whom is a drill sergeant and the other a policeman or a municipal official.

As already admitted, this war is a Traders' War, in so far that it would never have happened had it not been for the manufacturers and bankers of Germany, aided and abetted by their international colleagues of every race under the sun, who had hopes of making profits out of the wreckage. But if the armament-makers and the loan-lending financiers began the War, they have arranged their plans very badly for themselves. With the foolishness that one always expects from the practical man of business, they have chosen for the basis of this War the extremely dangerous form of a life-and-death struggle between the Prussian and the Latin spirits. If Prussia goes down it will be a straight blow between the two eyes of bureaucracy and commercialism. Not many of us are lighthearted enough to hope that the blow will be final. But at least there is the knowledge that the harder the stroke against Prussia the quicker the world will see freedom. There is at least the delight of knowing that these foolish masters have so clumsily arranged this Great War which was to make their fortunes that it is just as likely in the long run to dig them a grave. They have given the human race the one rational excuse for fighting that exists—the possibility of breaking up the very heart centre of the system of bureaucracy and commercialism.

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The question at issue over the body of the Prussian nation is whether the chief end of man is to get a good government or a free soul. There are perfectly nice and respectable people (the Fabians, for example) who think that if a government does its work efficiently, the more of it we have the better. That is an astounding error of judgment. There is something radically bad in the very idea of governing others. Prussian Germany is a danger just because it is the most efficient government the world has ever seen. The German bureaucrat is the most terrible being in creation, just because he has done his work with greater precision than ever bureaucracy did it before. The greatest peril to civilisation is the ruler who really succeeds in ruling.

One does not dread the Turk or the Tartar, because they do not, apparently, know how to govern. One dreads the Prussian because he does know how. The Turks certainly carry tax-collecting to a troublesome degree, and usually enforce it by the inconvenient method of the sword. But this form of tyranny is somewhat superficial; and, in any case, it disappears immediately a certain standard of civilisation decrees that the sword is an ungentlemanly weapon for such a purpose. But according to the Prussian standards, on the contrary, the more their civilisation grows the more their function of governing extends. They visualise civilisation as the increase of government. They might as well measure civilisation by the number of doctors a nation requires. In this mad perversion of common-sense, the Teuton mind is rejoiced when it contemplates the number of its policemen and soldiers. It is the most perverted ideal that any nation ever held before its eyes.

Turning to the Russian government, the point that one has tried to emphasise is that the bureaucracy of Petrograd is, and historically always has been, a Teutonic importation. It is the plague of the West, sent in revenge, perhaps, for the many plagues we have suffered from the East. But it has no more touched the heart of the Slav people than a storm disturbs the depths of the ocean. The heart of Russia (and Servia also) is still democratic and communal. The Teuton-bred bureaucracy of the Tsars, spite of all its terrors, has never succeeded in cowing the Slav ; while that same Teuton bureaucracy at Berlin has left the people of Prussia a bleached pulp of humanity, their blood drained from their veins, and a purblind professor's chemico-mechanism injected in its place. The bureaucracy of Russia has taught the Slavs nothing—except the gospel of the hatred that every healthy man has for parchments and red tape and policemen's batons. The history of Russian bureaucracy is the history of a mad bull trying to knock down a mountain with its horns. It has pitifully failed.

It has captured nobody but itself. There is no class wholly on its side. The aristocrats had a good chance of sharing the spoils of bureaucracy—but half the aristocrats of Russia are on the democratic side. It is even very doubtful whether the bureaucracy has often had the confidence of its Tsars. Half-demented men like Peter the Great have been on the side of the officials, but Peter was one of those abortions that cannot possibly affect a nation of sane citizens for all time ; their influence can only be of passing importance. If humanity can be turned by madmen, then is history a game of pitch and toss.

The lesson that emerges from this fact, that the Teuton mind won in Berlin and failed in Petrograd, is that we must never judge a nation by its rulers—but always by its people. We put the Prussians low down the scale of humanity because we have seen in them the attribute of sheep. We judge the Slav more highly because he is continually resisting where the Prussian is everlastingly submitting. It does not concern our case very much to be told that the Black Hundred secret police gang of Russia has done more tyrannical deeds than the police of Potsdam. The particular blackness of one policeman against another is an idle subject for idle men. It is as if one haggled over the difference of inches in the length of two assassins' daggers. The point which does concern us is to judge the strength of the national resistance. Never judge a people by their rulers; but always by themselves.

This Great War of 1914 is a protest, probably an unconscious protest, against governors as a profession. This fierce, unexpressible hatred for everything Prussian is a European rising against a theory that government is in itself a good thing. This Prussian theory has convinced no one on this earth, except the Fabian Society, perhaps. The Prussian kings are the only people known to history that have, in cold blood, set out to drill their people into order. Or, in case anyone can unearth another instance of such a tyrannical attempt, let us say that they are the only rulers who have so perfectly succeeded in their foolish designs. So long as the Prussians kept within their own borders, the civilised world could regard them and their people with contempt. But the moment that a Prussian king added the rant of

Imperialism to the folly of bureaucracy, then it was time for Europe to defend itself. As we have seen, it is only within the last few years that Germany has become Imperialist in its desires. Until then it had been content to be Pan-Germanic. Now, the Swelled-Head of Europe has begun to push its Mailed Fist in everybody's face. This War of 1914 is the loudest shriek of tyranny that has tried to split the suffering ears of humanity. Europe could stand this vulgar din no longer. Hence the War.

There are some people who are greatly concerned to find themselves fighting on the side of a Russian nation which is still, as a whole, a religious nation. There are Western scientists who curl up, with a nervous twitching, when they read of Russian soldiers being inspired for battle by the raising of an icon. With every desire to sympathise with the "modern man" in his dislike of dogma and superstition, one can, however, hold out to him very little hope that the religious spirit is at all ready to give way before his more mathematical precision. The fact of the matter is that most of the worst evils of the world are forms of mathematics and materialism. The man who goes into battle with a firm belief in his God is a far less objectionable person than the man whose faith is in Krupp. When Russians go to war in defence of their Slav brothers of Servia, and for their common religious faith, it is altogether a more inspiring thing than when the Germans fight for the benefit of their trade returns.

This War, if it has any broad meaning at all, is a revolt against two-thirds of those manners and customs which too many of us have hastily assumed to be good

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just because they are new. A superficial survey of the theory of Evolution led to the premature belief that the last was also the best. In this way, it has chanced that some quite unprejudiced people had begun to think that the modern industrial and centralised State is necessarily a better form of society than the mediæval handicraft and decentralised State. There was the more haste in jumping to this conclusion, because it was also the judgment of the newspaper world. It did not occur to everybody that these aforesaid newspapers were almost entirely owned by gentlemen whose money had been made in the modern States ; and who would have had about as much chance of making a fortune in a mediæval State as of picking up a bank-note in Zululand. On analysis, it will be found that nine-tenths of the praise of modern institutions comes from persons who are getting the advantages without sharing the disadvantages.

When the modern man—one ought really to write his name in capital letters—is nervous at the thought of fighting side by side with old-world Russia, his whole argument is based on the assumption that parliaments and factories and machinery are all magnificent proofs of the advancement of humanity. He regards communal villages, agricultural simplicity, travelling pack-merchants and religious sentiment as all signs and symbols of a backward age. The man who really believes it is better to live in a dirty factory town than in a village has strange tastes. When he adds an admiration for parliamentary systems which have produced the most self-seeking corruption of any trade under the sun, he only increases our astonishment. When he calmly tells us that to argue these points is unnecessary waste of time, we can only

come to the conclusion that he would make a fortune by bluff at poker.

To repeat, if this War means anything, it means a revolt against modern civilisation. If the modern commercial-capitalist-machine production is right, then why, in the name of common-sense, should we crush Germany, which bids fair to be the machine nation, par excellence, of the world. If modern centralised government is a good thing, then let us shed our last drop of blood in defence of the monarchy of Potsdam. If religion and romance are evil things, then let us raise our voices in grateful praise of a Prussia that would destroy Rheims Cathedral rather than lose a battery of guns. Every symptom of the "modern" world has reached its highest point in Prussia. If we really want a modern State, why destroy its choicest accomplishments? Germany can give us everything modern, from a 42-centimetre gun as a shrine, to a regiment of factory slaves to serve the altar. If the modern world is right, then why, in heaven's name, crush Prussia? If we really believe that Prussia is right and Russia is wrong, then it is sheer nonsense to be bound by any scrap-of-paper diplomacy.

It is because the Latin spirit of France (and Italy) has known better than most others how to pick its way through this mysterious world, sifting the good from the old and the bad from the new, that the defeat of France would be a Sedan of humanity. The spirit of its eternal striving after freedom—not always wisely or successfully—would be crushed by the victory of a Prussian race, to whom Liberty is now nothing but an old wife's tale. On the East, Slav Russia, with its reactionary old-world

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manners, is no longer a dread to the mind that refuses to take Western civilisation at the estimate of the millionaire and the political financiers. We are beginning to realise that most of the civilisation of the West is the inspired bluff of the paid hack-writers—inspired and paid by the people who share the spoils. They tell us we have advanced to higher things. We ask in reply : Did the Middle Ages produce anything so hideous and deadly as the factory towns of Lancashire or the rookeries of Dublin ? Are Chicago and Manchester the next step towards heaven ? Are the slums of London and the vulgar wealth of New York the price we must pay for the West ? Then more and more of us are ready to take our chances with the Black Hundred of the Russian police. Instead of asking ourselves whether Western Europe may be able to save Russia, we have a last hope that perhaps the Slavs may save us. Little wonder that the Prussians dread the Slav peril, for they are at the two poles of thought. Many of us have dreaded the Russian alliance ; and we owe Sir Edward Grey an apology for our denseness, and a congratulation that he took a longer view than we did.

It is only when the worst rottenness of the Prussian mind is realised that it is possible to see that the case against Prussia is, in many ways, a case on behalf of Austria-Hungary. In the sense that the German Empire is Prussian, so is the Austrian Empire anti-Prussian. For the very reason that we hate Prussia, so we ought to wish to save much of Austria. If we are on the side of the Russian Slavs because we admire their virtues, how can we desire to crush the 30,000,000 Slavs of Austria-Hungary who have the same virtues ? How

can we desire to crush the Hungarians who have hated the Teuton bureaucracy, and died for that hatred, more than any race in Europe? Whoever survives this Great War, Hungary must be saved; if its Slav territories must be returned to their rightful owners, then Hungary must be made the freer and securer in the possession of what is retained. Then, there will come a Greater Serbia; to it will be joined at least all that part of Bosnia and Herzegovina that by a popular vote expresses its desire to leave the dominions of Austria for the companionship of its own race. If they so decide, also by popular vote, the Slav provinces of Hungary may be joined to Serbia also. There are patriotic Servians who dread that their race is not "fit for modern government." That is the very reason why some of us consider that they have so much right to govern. It is one of the greatest Slav virtues that they are not politicians. To the north, isolated from its race by Teuton and Magyar lands, is Bohemia. If its people, too, claim to decide their fate by a popular vote, what can be said against their right? It may be that Bohemia must emerge as an independent kingdom.

But if the Magyars and the Slavs are to be free, what will become of the Teuton bureaucracy of Vienna and its tool the Hapsburg monarchy? Even for these, Teutons though they are, one can spare a regret if they have to disappear from history. They have had many faults, these Hapsburgs. Being Teutons, they have not known how to respect the freedom of their subjects. The ballot of the people of Venetia, that was taken in 1866 to decide whether they should be ruled by Austria or by Italy, is a startling popular estimate of Teuton rule. The

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figures were : for Austria, 40 votes ; for Italy, 640,000 votes. No candidate for the privilege of governorship has any further right to go to the poll of historical judgment after that. The Teutons never won the affection of any alien race, and never will. Alsace was in theory a German land as long ago as the ninth century ; and to-day its people are still longing to escape their bondage and fly to the rule of Celtic France. Why then should the Hapsburgs be acquitted before the chair of justice ?

For one thing, compared with the Prussians, the Austrians are gentlefolk. Compared with the sergeant Hohenzollerns, the Hapsburgs are cultured people. The Emperor William II. is said to have scoffed in the face of the Archduke Rudolph, because he was the friend of art and letters : “ Nonsense of that sort is unworthy of a soldier and a Crown Prince.” It is a fairly complete summary of the capacity of the two families. Prussia never produced a monarch so bearable as Maria Theresa ; it is inconceivable that it should. Again, the Austrian people must be distinguished from the mass of Germans. One has heard them thus described : When you meet a man who speaks German, and yet has good manners, you know he is an Austrian ” ! After all, as we have seen, there is a lot of Celtic blood in Austria ; or, one may put it—there is not much Prussian blood.

Good manners should always be rewarded in this brusque world. But that is no excuse for keeping any alien races under a Teuton government a moment longer than they choose. If Hungary and the Slavs demand freedom from Vienna, freedom they must have. But why not suggest to the Germans that the Hapsburgs would be a pleasanter set of rulers than the Hohenzollerns ?

And if the Hapsburgs are as bad as some people make out, there would be a touch of acceptable and ironic logic in turning them loose on the Germans, who have such a passion for being governed. Why should not the Duchy of Austria be again added to the German Confederation, which it left so short a time ago, in 1866 ? It would help in the difficult work of civilising the Prussians. It would strengthen all the best side of Germany. And if the Germans are incapable of solving the problem of their own freedom, it may be the business of the civilised world to shut in the Teutonic race until it has governed itself to sterility and harmlessness. If ever a race asked for the lash of governors, it is these Prussianised Germans. But let them not be afraid that any decent nation is desirous of adding them or their lands to its dominions. The Germans are free to go their own way—however stupid—so long as they do not menace the peace of other peoples. We have better things to do than attend to the affairs of a race that persistently prefers the ideals of an armed sheepfold. If freedom is the right to choose one's destiny, let the Prussians have the joy of choosing to be slaves. We should be unworthy of posing as the apostles of liberty if we did not grant them that right.

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